











**AUSTRIAN WAR GOVERNMENT**

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY  
OF THE WORLD WAR**

**JAMES T. SHOTWELL, LL.D.,** *General Editor.*

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**TRANSLATED AND ABRIDGED SERIES**

# AUSTRIAN WAR GOVERNMENT

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

IN the autumn of 1914, when the scientific study of the effects of war upon modern life passed suddenly from theory to history, the Division of Economics and History of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace proposed to adjust the program of its researches to the new and altered problems which the War presented. The existing program, which had been prepared as the result of a conference of economists held at Berne in 1911, and which dealt with the facts then at hand, had just begun to show the quality of its contributions; but for many reasons it could no longer be followed out. A plan was therefore drawn up at the request of the Director of the Division, in which it was proposed, by means of an historical survey, to attempt to measure the economic cost of the War and the displacement which it was causing in the processes of civilization. Such an "Economic and Social History of the World War," it was felt, if undertaken by men of judicial temper and adequate training, might ultimately, by reason of its scientific obligations to truth, furnish data for the forming of sound public opinion, and thus contribute fundamentally toward the aims of an institution dedicated to the cause of international peace.

The need for such an analysis, conceived and executed in the spirit of historical research, was increasingly obvious as the War developed, releasing complex forces of national life not only for the vast process of destruction, but also for the stimulation of new capacities for production. This new economic activity, which under normal conditions of peace might have been a gain to society, and the surprising capacity exhibited by the belligerent nations for enduring long and increasing loss—often while presenting the outward semblance of new prosperity—made necessary a reconsideration of the whole field of war economics. A double obligation was therefore placed upon the Division of Economics and History. It was obliged to concentrate its work upon the problem thus presented, and to study it as a whole; in other words, to apply to it the tests and disciplines of history. Just as the War itself was a single event, though penetrating by seemingly unconnected ways to the remotest parts of the world, so the analysis of it must be developed

according to a plan at once all embracing and yet adjustable to the practical limits of the available data.

During the actual progress of the War, however, the execution of this plan for a scientific and objective study of war economics proved impossible in any large and authoritative way. Incidental studies and surveys of portions of the field could be made and were made under the direction of the Division, but it was impossible to undertake a general history for obvious reasons. In the first place, an authoritative statement of the resources of belligerents bore directly on the conduct of armies in the field. The result was to remove as far as possible from scrutiny those data of the economic life of the countries at war which would ordinarily, in time of peace, be readily available for investigation. In addition to this difficulty of consulting documents, collaborators competent to deal with them were for the most part called into national service in the belligerent countries and so were unavailable for research. The plan for a war history was therefore postponed until conditions should arise which would make possible not only access to essential documents, but also the coöperation of economists, historians, and men of affairs in the nations chiefly concerned, whose joint work would not be misunderstood either in purpose or in content.

Upon the termination of the War, the Endowment once more took up the original plan, and it was found with but slight modification to be applicable to the situation. Work was begun in the summer and autumn of 1918. In the first place a final conference of the Advisory Board of Economists of the Division of Economics and History was held in Paris, which limited itself to planning a series of short preliminary surveys of special fields. Since, however, the purely preliminary character of such studies was further emphasized by the fact that they were directed more especially toward those problems which were then fronting Europe as questions of urgency, it was considered best not to treat them as part of the general survey, but rather as of contemporary value in the period of war settlement. It was clear that not only could no general program be laid down *a priori* by this conference as a whole, but that a new and more highly specialized research organization than that already existing would be needed to undertake the Economic and Social History of the World War, one based more upon national grounds in the first instance, and less upon purely international coöperation. Until the facts of



national history could be ascertained, it would be impossible to proceed with comparative analysis; and the different national histories were themselves of almost baffling intricacy and variety. Consequently the former European Committee of Research was dissolved, and in its place it was decided to erect an Editorial Board in each of the larger countries and to nominate special editors in the smaller ones, who should concentrate, for the present at least, upon their own economic and social war history.

The nomination of these boards by the General Editor was the first step taken in every country where the work has begun. And if any justification were needed for the plan of the Endowment, it at once may be found in the lists of those, distinguished in scholarship or in public affairs, who have accepted the responsibility of editorship. This responsibility is by no means light, involving as it does the adaptation of the general editorial plan to the varying demands of national circumstances or methods of work; and the measure of success attained is due to the generous and earnest coöperation of those in charge in each country.

Once the editorial organization was established, there could be little doubt as to the first step which should be taken in each instance toward the actual preparation of the history. Without documents there can be no history. The essential records of the War, local as well as central, have therefore to be preserved and to be made available for research in so far as is compatible with public interest. But this archival task is a very great one, belonging of right to the Governments and other owners of historical sources and not to the historian or economist who proposes to use them. It is an obligation of ownership; for all such documents are public trust. The collaborators on this section of the War History, therefore, working within their own field as researchers, could only survey the situation as they found it and report their findings in the forms of guides or manuals; and perhaps, by stimulating a comparison of methods, help to further the adoption of those found to be most practical. In every country, therefore, this was the point of departure for actual work; although special monographs have not been written in every instance.

The first stage of the work upon the War History, dealing with little more than the externals of archives, seemed for a while to exhaust the possibilities of research, and had the plan of the history been limited to research based upon official documents, little more

could have been done, for once documents have been labeled "secret" few government officials can be found with sufficient courage or initiative to break open the seal. Thus vast masses of source material essential for the historian were effectively placed beyond his reach, although much of it was quite harmless from any point of view. While war conditions thus continued to hamper research, and were likely to do so for many years to come, some alternative had to be found.

Fortunately such an alternative was at hand in the narrative, amply supported by documentary evidence, of those who had played some part in the conduct of affairs during the War, or who, as close observers in privileged positions, were able to record from first or at least second-hand knowledge the economic history of different phases of the Great War, and of its effect upon society. Thus a series of monographs was planned consisting for the most part of unofficial yet authoritative statements, descriptive or historical, which may best be described as about halfway between memoirs and blue-books. These monographs make up the main body of the work assigned so far. They are not limited to contemporary war-time studies; for the economic history of the War must deal with a longer period than that of the actual fighting. It must cover the years of "deflation" as well, at least sufficiently to secure some fairer measure of the economic displacement than is possible in purely contemporary judgments.

With this phase of the work, the editorial problems assumed a new aspect. The series of monographs had to be planned primarily with regard to the availability of contributors, rather than of source material as in the case of most histories; for the contributors themselves controlled the sources. This in turn involved a new attitude toward those two ideals which historians have sought to emphasize, consistency and objectivity. In order to bring out the chief contribution of each writer it was impossible to keep within narrowly logical outlines; facts would have to be repeated in different settings and seen from different angles, and sections included which do not lie within the strict limits of history; and absolute objectivity could not be obtained in every part. Under the stress of controversy or apology, partial views would here and there find their expression. But these views are in some instances an intrinsic part of the history itself, contemporary measurements of facts as significant as the



facts with which they deal. Moreover, the work as a whole is planned to furnish its own corrective; and where it does not, others will.

In addition to the monographic treatment of source material, a number of studies by specialists are already in preparation, dealing with technical or limited subjects, historical or statistical. These monographs also partake to some extent of the nature of first-hand material, registering as they do the data of history close enough to the source to permit verification in ways impossible later. But they also belong to that constructive process by which history passes from analysis to synthesis. The process is a long and difficult one, however, and work upon it has only just begun. To quote an apt characterization; in the first stages of a history like this, one is only "picking cotton." The tangled threads of events have still to be woven into the pattern of history; and for this creative and constructive work different plans and organizations may be needed.

In a work which is the product of so complex and varied coöperation as this, it is impossible to indicate in any but a most general way the apportionment of responsibility of editors and authors for the contents of the different monographs. For the plan of the History as a whole and its effective execution the General Editor is responsible; but the arrangement of the detailed programs of study has been largely the work of the different Editorial Boards and divisional Editors, who have also read the manuscripts prepared under their direction. The acceptance of a monograph in this series, however, does not commit the editors to the opinions or conclusions of the authors. Like other editors, they are asked to vouch for the scientific merit, the appropriateness, and usefulness of the volumes admitted to the series; but the authors are naturally free to make their individual contributions in their own way. In like manner the publication of the monographs does not commit the Endowment to agreement with any specific conclusions which may be expressed therein. The responsibility of the Endowment is to History itself—an obligation not to avoid but to secure and preserve variant narratives and points of view, in so far as they are essential for the understanding of the War as a whole.

J. T. S.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THERE are no more significant chapters in the history of the World War than those revealing the influence of war itself on national political ideas and aspirations, and, through them, on States. From this standpoint, it is of the utmost importance to set down and analyze the war-time changes and developments produced in the outlook and institutions of the peoples of Europe. Such an analysis necessarily includes some account of the manner in which far-reaching modifications in the structure and functions of the State were carried through while the War was going on. For the instruction of posterity and of ourselves it is vital to understand the reactions of war on the dynamics and mechanics of government, in the widest sense, in every country.

The Austria dealt with in these pages is the Austria which existed to the end of the War, one of the two States which formed the Dual Monarchy after 1867. The methods by which it met the tasks laid upon it have a special interest because the Austrian State, as such, perished in the War, when the War destroyed the ancient political organization of the Habsburg dynasty over the whole area once known as Austria, in that unified Empire where its dynastic authority had been accepted since 1526. To study the effect of war on government in Austria is, therefore, both a contribution to the scientific analysis of the World War, and also the last chapter in the history of one of the two great German Powers that issued from the Holy Roman Empire, a State which was constitutionally united to Germany until 1866, and diplomatically connected with the German Empire after 1879, which formed, with it, the foundation of the entire political, economic, and cultural development of Central Europe throughout three centuries.

In the pages that follow, a brief survey of the historic system of government and administration in Austria as it existed at the outbreak of the War leads to an account of the structure and spirit of war government and of its special tasks—notably the State organization of production and distribution. In the light of internal political events two main phases are to be distinguished; the dictatorship period proper, from the outbreak of war to the death of Francis Joseph; and the attempt of Emperor Charles to restore parliamen-

tary institutions and thus heal the fearful wounds dealt during the Dictatorship. A brief description of the reasons for the failure of this endeavor forms the preface to an account of the actual process of dissolution. The October Manifesto provided this latter with a legal sanction; but it had long been prepared by the destruction of Parliament through the racial particularism of parties composing it, and by a gradual undermining of the bureaucratic tradition. Thanks, however, to the fact that in fifty years of racial strife the conflicting nationalities had gradually made their way into the machinery of state, a civil service capable of carrying on the new government stood ready to their hands, and so put at the service of the new States the traditions and experience of the old. This in its turn meant that the political and military catastrophe instead of spreading social ruin was able to provide a constructive opportunity.



## NOTE

IN this volume frequent use is made of certain terms which will probably be more familiar to Austrian than to American and English readers, and they are defined, very briefly, herewith.

“Crownlands”: The legal term, since 1849, for the divisions of the Habsburg Empire as it was early constituted. For a time, between 1848 and 1861, they were known as “provinces.” They retained their individual entity, represented by a diet, and a self-governing administrative body elected by the diet.

“Delegations”: Those committees elected separately by the parliaments of Austria and Hungary, which deliberated upon, and passed or rejected, the so-called common budget of the Empire, that is, the annual estimates of the expenses for the common army, the navy, and the foreign office.

“Polish Club”: The English translation of the Polish word “Kolo polski,” which became the permanent name of that political club that comprised all Polish members of parliament, and united them and their parties in one representative national body.

“Praesidial Bureaus,” or “Praesidium”: The bureau or staff of an Austrian Minister, as headed by his secretary.

“Sudetic Lands”: The provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Austrian Silesia, so-called from the Sudeten Hills.

“Succession States”: Those states which now represent the old Austro-Hungarian Empire as once constituted.

J. R.



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## CHAPTER I

### AUSTRIAN ADMINISTRATION BEFORE THE WAR

#### 1. *The Basis of Authority.*

THE governmental and administrative system of Austria at the outbreak of the World War had been established, in all essentials, by the middle of the nineteenth century. After the collapse of the Revolution of 1848, the union of various heterogeneous lands which had constituted the House of Habsburg for centuries was transformed into an Austrian Empire, supreme over Hungary and the other domains. This transformation was the work of a small body of energetic and purposeful statesmen, supported by the readiness of the masses to accept the central control of the dynasty.

The basis of the system and the guiding juridical and administrative idea of the institutions thus established, go much further back. The organization actually brought into being by the counsellors of the young Francis Joseph between 1849 and 1855 was, in a last analysis, a continuation of the constitutional and administrative methods introduced by Maria Theresa in the eighteenth century, continued by her son, Joseph II, and maintained by the Emperor Francis. The one significant difference between the old régime, ending in 1848, and the new absolutism, accepted during the youth of Francis Joseph in the 'fifties, was that the principle of ruthless bureaucratic centralization, developed in France, was introduced throughout the Austrian system, subject only to such technical modifications as had, for instance, long been adopted in Prussia and in Bavaria. In other words, the patriarchal police absolutism of 1748-1848 was translated into what contemporary critics, attached to the older ideas, called ministerial absolutism. Thus, the new, carefully organized State system gave far less scope than did the previous régime under the Emperors Joseph II and Francis for any personal interposition by the Emperor in the day to day business of administration, though it left in his hands the control of the armed forces, the direction of foreign policy, and a final decision on important legislative enactments. Some such modernization of the machinery of authority was, indeed, necessitated by the indus-

trialization and general economic development of Austria, which—begun before 1848 and proceeding rapidly after the Revolution—presented to the administration innumerable new and ever varying problems. The actual tasks before it, with the corresponding legal enactments determining matters of principle and procedure, involved an increasingly complicated jurisdictional and administrative apparatus. They demanded, according to German ideas, an expert staff, and, for higher posts, one trained in the law. Moreover, the number of problems that had to be dealt with rapidly yet thoroughly, excluded the intervention of a monarch, no matter how “benevolent.” Modern industrial society, as it began to grow up in Austria between 1850 and 1870, required a complete rationalization of public authority.

The basic principle, common to the old “pre-March”<sup>1</sup> and the new Austrian order established between 1850 and 1855, is clear. The Revolution left intact the fundamental idea of the monarchical order of government. Austria is the creation of a dynasty which, for more than six centuries, successfully combined an ultimately unlimited conception of its authority with the satisfaction of the great and lasting needs of the vast and often contending congeries of peoples dwelling in the old hereditary lands, in the territories of the Kingdom of Bohemia, and in the whole area of the crown of St. Stephen. The dynastic family idea, which determined the history of these countries, was rooted in the fact that all of them formed a single condominium, even while they insisted on their historic and political individuality under the Habsburg overlordship. After the victory of Ferdinand II over the feudal magnates of the West, the political and military power of this constitutional unity was expressed exclusively through the ruling will of the reigning hereditary dynast, who at the same time was German Emperor. The position of Hungary, of course, always remained quite different from that of the other hereditary domains, though there, too, a solemn declaration of the unity of the realm, such as had been laid down in the Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VI in 1713, was given legislative form by a resolution of the Hungarian Diet. Maria Theresa’s reforms had produced one far-reaching change in the internal organization of what hitherto had been a purely dynastic

<sup>1</sup> March 13, 1848, was the date of the outbreak of the Revolution in Vienna.

union superimposed on a medieval confederation of peoples. While the ancient feudal constitution of Hungary remained intact, the Empress began, and her son Joseph II completed, the construction of a central power, an effective State in the modern sense of the word, out of the non-Hungarian lands, including therein, after 1772, the portion of Poland later known as Galicia, and Bukovina ceded by the Turks in 1775. They were formed into a unified legal, economic, and governmental system, directed by the monarch and the counsellors of his court, and by the authorities, officers, and divisional commands of the standing army, organized on a strongly unified model, and all appointed by the Emperor.

In every one of its activities this State represented the realization of that ideal of enlightened absolutism which, fully expressed in Germany about the middle of the eighteenth century, found its center and driving force in the concept of the "God-given" right of the Prince, the hereditary dynast, to rule and benefit "his" people. Like Frederick William I and his son, Frederick the Great in Prussia, Maria Theresa and her co-regent and successor, Joseph II, re-created the Austrian State from top to bottom, and completed its structure to the last story. In so doing, they built upon the medieval social hierarchy and its political ideas which they had inherited an entirely novel and mighty organism—the State as such, *i.e.*, an apparatus of government, whose power was concentrated in the hands of the monarch. The moral idea behind this edifice was simply the assumption underlying the current philosophy of the day, according to which it was the duty of the monarch to further to the utmost the material and moral well-being of his "subjects," that is to say, of the people and countries subjected to his rule. In the case of Austria this State was an artificial creation from above, both externally and internally, so that recently there has been a tendency to speak of it as an "authoritarian" State, in contradistinction to the "popular" State, whose institutions depend on the will of the people, *i.e.*, on the more or less highly developed political consciousness of the communities composing it. Austria, comprising the non-Hungarian possessions of the House of Habsburg, developed as an authoritarian State; and such she remained to the last, although far-reaching changes followed after 1860, when the Emperor Francis Joseph accepted the constitutional principle.

At the same time, the solid basis and indispensable scaffolding of



the structure of imperial rule was a constitutional administrative system; and it was this that held together the vast territories lying between the Russo-Rumanian frontier, those of Switzerland and Germany, and, on the south the Western Balkan States. The authoritarian State was a constitutional administration in the sense in which the term has been used in Central Europe since the eighteenth century to characterize the activities of authorities appointed by the head of the State or, more correctly, of officials appointed by him, who recognized the monarch as their exclusive master and leader and who operated through a central government which, in its turn, consisted of Ministers exclusively nominated by the sovereign.

After the Revolution of 1848 one great change was introduced in the reforms drafted by Dr. Alexander Bach, Minister of the Interior in the Schwarzenberg Ministry, and accepted by the young Emperor Francis Joseph in 1850-1855. Although the revolutionary movement of 1848 was dominated even more by national than by liberal ideas, it led to a determination not merely to fulfil the principle of an unlimited, absolutist, and authoritarian State, but to give it a technically perfect form. In Austria the Revolution forced upon the dynasty a most significant element of social reform—the emancipation of the peasant; and the last vestige of medieval feudalism was swept from its domains by removing the final traces of serfdom and by abrogating the police and judicial powers of the territorial magnates. This made it possible to extend imperial administration over the entire range of local government, which was thenceforward controlled by a new State organization, operating through district units formed by the amalgamation of several communes, while the Central Government functioned through subordinate provincial bodies, the so-called regional governments (*Landesregierungen*).

Here is the organic idea of Austrian administration as it existed to the very end of the Empire. The entire State administration was built up from below in three tiers: district authorities, provincial governments, and central boards, the latter, after 1848, being organized as Ministries on the French model, and coördinated in a Council of Ministers (Cabinet) presided over by the Emperor himself or by the Minister President (Prime Minister). This tripartite division pervaded the internal administration, with the Minister of the Interior at its head; and the control of finance was curiously

combined with it, since the district and provincial authorities of the Interior were, at the same time, the tax-levying and tax-collecting units of the Finance Department without prejudice to the independent direction of the entire financial system by the Ministry of Finance in Vienna, and the provincial boards directly subordinate to it. Controlled by the Ministry of the Interior were also the special administrative activities connected with recruiting for the imperial army, although military administration proper had its specific machinery within the army itself, this being based on the army-corps commands, which were thoroughly modernized after the introduction of universal compulsory military service in 1866.

For the moment, this brief outline must suffice to summarize the complicated apparatus of Habsburg power, built up in the second half of the nineteenth century. In subsequent pages it will be described as it was after functioning for sixty years; but as an organization it remained substantially unaltered despite the great political changes of 1860 and 1867.

## *2. Absolutism and Bureaucratic Centralization.*

IT will be clear from what we have said that the Austrian system of government and administration, as restored after the Revolution, was simply an application of the principle of ruthless autocracy as conceived by Francis Joseph at his accession and solemnly proclaimed in 1851. The basis of the system was, therefore, a highly centralized, bureaucratic organization of State power. This has two further results which were closely connected. First, since the unified Empire comprised eleven nations and ten languages, it was necessary to conduct this centralized administration through the medium of one legal and official language, *i.e.*, German. Secondly, the centralization involved a rejection of the demand, made from the beginning of the Revolution by all nationalities, including the German, for certain great reforms (granted at the time) which were designed to lead to self-government by establishing communal bodies and the right to vote in the provinces, districts, and communes. At the same time the existing Hungarian form of self-government by nobility and gentry in the counties, was abolished; while Austria saw a permanent dissolution of the Provincial Diets, which after many centuries, the Revolution of 1848 had developed into effective local



parliaments. Furthermore, the Communal Law of 1849, promulgated by the Emperor himself at the time of the declaration of the Constitution, was annulled after Francis Joseph had formally suspended that Constitution on December 31, 1851. It is true that the Communal Councils remained, having been elected under the above-mentioned Communal Law of 1849, but no subsequent elections could take place, and the councils themselves, with their mayors, became mere appendages of the State authorities, to whom they were strictly subordinated. The success of this effort to impose a rigid bureaucratic and police administration on the public life of so great an Empire as was Austria after 1849 depended on the moral and physical forces behind the system. It was contingent, that is to say, first on the effective retention, as the sole sure support of autocracy, of the great standing army, whose prestige the dynasty had kept victoriously intact in 1848 and 1849, alike in Vienna, in Prague, in Milan, and in Budapest—with Russian help in the latter case. In the second place it was conditioned by the extent to which the hitherto ill-provided finances of the realm could bear the expenses of administration and of the army. It depended, further, on how far the more advanced German and Czech middle classes, after their uprising in 1848 had shaken the old State to its foundation, could be induced to accept a régime which suppressed every modern aspiration and idea. Behind these conditions of success lay a final question. The Magyar nation was held down by military force. It had been robbed of its old constitutional rights and of its independence. Nobles, middle class, and peasants had been welded into one by the fire of nationality lit by Kossuth. Would it flame up again against the hated German absolutism? And, if so, when?

All these questions were raised sooner than they need have been by the foreign policy of Francis Joseph. First, Austria was involved in the Crimean War at a heavy cost to the prestige and finances of the Monarchy; and in 1859 she engaged in a new war with Piedmont and its ally France, under Louis Napoleon, a conflict which ended in the loss of Lombardy and a decline in the status of Austria. During these ten years, however, the non-German peoples remained perfectly quiet, and the Liberal movement in Vienna and the German towns, repressed since 1849, did not as yet appear dangerous to the throne. Nevertheless, even Francis Joseph saw that he must listen

to the advice of those who urged a suspension of absolutism and a trend toward a moderate but definite constitutionalism.

There is no space here to recount how the resistance of Francis Deák and the Magyar National Liberals frustrated the attempt at a merely partial restoration of the Hungarian constitution; or to tell the story of the final, unexpectedly complete success of the Magyars after the war of 1866, the second political catastrophe precipitated by Francis Joseph's foreign policy. What here concerns us is the reaction of this upon the Austrian system in those non-Hungarian domains, which since the middle of the eighteenth century had formed the authoritarian State. The essential fact revealed by the moral and political collapse of autocracy was that Austria was a combination of different races, countries, and languages, held together by the dynasty, so that there was a fundamental antagonism between the centralized State built up by the bureaucracy and the ideas which Western political thought had aroused in the various nationalities. Two strains mingled in these ideas. On the one hand, the principle of nationality culminated in the demand that the State should give equal treatment to all peoples, languages, and cultures, and should grant complete autonomy to each individual nation; on the other hand, the principle of democracy demanded that in Austria as in France, Belgium, and the South German States, the mass of the people should share in government. Working together, these two principles were creating that new conception of liberty and citizenship which throughout Europe was stirring among both middle classes and peasants, and which was also beginning to influence the whole body of the working classes. Attempts to limit the power of the Crown by the creation of a central parliament had done little or nothing to satisfy this modern conception of freedom in the form in which it necessarily presented itself in Austria. Here, above all, the "State," superimposed on a great number of countries of definite and historic individuality, and comprising eight distinct peoples, was a mechanical construction, and in no sense a living or politically coördinated unity.

At the same time there could be no greater error than to antedate the break-up of the monarchy after the World War by reference to ideas and aspirations dating back to 1867. Beyond question the sense of historic unity created by the dynastic State was then a vital force, substantially strengthened from the middle of the nineteenth cen-

ture, by the course of actual economic development. The peoples were aware of the advantages of the great unified market established in the eighteenth century. What, from 1848 on, they all, including a considerable proportion of the Germans, strove for was a modification of the rigidly centralized system which they hoped to secure by some form of devolution that should give local autonomy to the different components of the Empire. The conflict thus lay, on the one hand, between that centralization which, since 1748, had seemed indispensable to the bureaucracy, the Court, and the army, not only for the security and welfare of the Empire, but also for the maintenance of the dynasty, and on the other hand, the federal principle which animated the Slavs, and which was shared by the territorial magnates, by the Conservative Catholic Germans, and, above all, by the peasants in the Alpine regions. This deep antagonism between Centralism and Federalism acted like a ferment in the Reichstag in 1848; and the draft of a Constitution attempted in no unskilful fashion to find a solution for it. This constitution, however, never came any nearer realization than did the one drawn up on its model by the Schwarzenberg Ministry and formally promulgated by the Emperor in March 4, 1849. In 1860, the question came up again, and then, for good or evil, the Court was obliged to accept a return to constitutional forms. By that time it had, however, become abundantly clear that the progressive dominance of the principle of nationality as the driving force in modern Europe had made a mere introduction of parliamentary government and its forms a totally inadequate solution of the problem presented in Austria, with its diverse races.

At this stage it is important to grasp the ruling forces and tendencies in the Austria of the day. The Emperor, the Archdukes, the Generals, and the Court were opposed in principle to any real political independence for the people, even if granted only to the upper classes. The actual possessors of power, and the indispensable support of the dynasty, were the bureaucrats, German to a man. Their leaders had set their faces against any but the most limited constitutionalism. In this position they had behind them the German bourgeoisie both of Vienna and of the other Austrian cities, even though they were far inferior to Vienna in population and wealth; and from an economic or political point of view, the urban bourgeoisie was the most powerful class in the community. Moreover,



in the stage of economic and general development then prevailing, it was almost exclusively German. The Czechs were preponderatingly peasants; in Prague alone a Slavonic bourgeoisie was growing up, and was coming to be looked upon by the little country towns of Bohemia and Moravia as the leader of a growing nationalist movement. In fact, though hidden behind the mantle of absolutism, political and nationalist ideas were developing fast. The literary and personal influence of men like Palácky, Rieger, and, above all, Havlíček, had already laid the foundations of future democratic Czech policy. In Poland, the nobles were the only class that counted politically. The peasantry of Galicia, by nature conservative, were not, as yet, a political factor; their relations to the great landowners were the same as those of the peasants in the other Slav territories.

During the decade of the new absolutist régime, only two considerable political changes took place: first, a closer rapprochement between the upper orders of the Viennese bureaucracy and the mild post-Liberals of 1848, who belonged to the upper- and middle-class Germans; second, a definite alignment of most of the great landowners (the so-called feudal nobles) of the Sudetic lands with the Slavs. This part of the nobility and the strongly Catholic peasants came together, separating from both the middle-class Liberals and from the bureaucracy, which regarded them as negligible. In the same way, the landowners in the German Alpine regions drew toward the clerical peasants there. The abolition of the feudal services of the latter had, to a large extent, removed the old antagonism between feudal landlords and former villeins. At the beginning of the 'sixties a certain measure of common economic interest began to develop, and, acting on their common conservative and clerical outlook, served to weld landowners and land workers into something like a political unity. Bohemia and the neighboring regions presented the most striking instance of this development. After 1860 a nobles' party was definitely established in Bohemia, and its program expressed the federal principle adopted by Czechs, Poles, and South Slavs in 1848. The political doctrine underlying it was first proclaimed and defended in Hungary by a great writer and patriot, Joseph von Eötvös. From him the leaders of the conservative movement, supported by the peasantry and by the Nationalist ferment of the masses in the Slav countries, took over the concept of the historic individuality and rights of each constituent part of the

Monarchy. Emphasis was laid on provincial autonomy as the juridical and political essence of Austrian constitutionalism. Such a movement was in the sharpest contradiction to the centralizing policy of the Emperor after the Revolution; but Czech politicians followed the same lines when they based their program on a historic right to local autonomy. Since the Czechs were in a majority in Bohemia and Moravia, they hoped to secure a dominant rôle in any Diet set up within an independent Bohemia, and to make the official recognition of their language the starting point for an untrammelled development of their national life. Similar recollections of conditions long past turned South Slavs into autonomists in Carniola, Istria, and Dalmatia. In Galicia the Poles thought along federal lines, because, ever dreaming of a restoration of the Kingdom of Poland, they regarded themselves as only temporary tenants of the Habsburgs.

Though such ideas filled Slav hearts with hopes of a better future, they aroused grave apprehension among Germans, both in Bohemia and Moravia, and in lands of mixed nationality like Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola. Germans in Austria could not help being centralists. Confidently relying on their general cultural superiority, they hoped that the new constitution would strengthen their predominance over the Slavs; and since their liberalism was rooted in nationalism, they could coöperate with the bureaucracy, which though autocratic in politics, was strongly influenced after 1848 by liberal economic ideas.

Thus the higher grades of officialdom, exclusively recruited from the German middle and upper classes, regarded Austria's progress as dependent on the unimpaired maintenance of their central position in the Empire, and on the continued political ascendancy of these two classes. For some time it had been ready to purchase their support at the price of a certain limited degree of parliamentarianism. In 1860, however, relations were still strained between Liberals, who ever since 1849 had been absolutely muzzled by the absolutist régime and officialdom, then in enjoyment of the plenitude of power conferred on it by Alexander Bach and Schwarzenberg. Even German Liberals, therefore, sought to limit the monopoly of power by the bureaucracy and to restrict the authoritarian State in general. They accordingly asked that the introduction of the constitutional principle in Austria should carry with it a guarantee of autonomy

and decentralization in local government, both in provinces and in communes. They wished to secure a definitely "State-free" atmosphere in local administration which would liberate the individual and the community as such from the omnipotence of the Central Government and its bureaucracy. Here it seemed as though the Germans would find themselves in line with the Slavs, but the agreement soon proved to be more apparent than real. Poles and Czechs sought a constitutional autonomy for which the Germans had no use; nor was anything further from the minds of the latter than the conception of such autonomy as a first step toward a future federal reconstruction of the entire State. They wanted autonomy in local government; but they wanted it within the framework of a unitary State, ruled from the center, with as few exceptions as possible, and ruled in German.

### *3. Constitutional Laws and the System of Autonomous Administration (1861-1867).*

ON February 26, 1861, the Emperor, without any popular consultation or vote, issued a new Constitution, the work of his new Minister, Anton von Schmerling. Schmerling, a liberal-minded German, had made his mark in 1848. As a bureaucrat, he desired to strengthen the power of Viennese officialdom throughout the Empire; at the same time, as a Liberal he sought to find some compromise between the authoritarian State and the idea of autonomy. His Constitution reflects his mind. Through Provincial constitutions, it created Provincial Diets in all the "Crownlands" (Kronlaender), as the Historic Territories were called after 1848, with a definite though strictly limited area of local legislation and the right to levy local taxes. Furthermore, Boards freely elected from the members of the Provincial Diets were given certain insignificant powers of self-government, defined by the letter and spirit of the law. Some recognition of the basic constitutional rights of the Historic Territories was implied in the arrangement whereby delegations from the Diets alone composed the Reichsrat or Central Parliament of the Empire, which was created at the same time.

In the first session of the new Parliament, the Schmerling Ministry brought in an Imperial Communal Councils Bill, which was supported by those Germans who stood for local autonomy. This Bill gave extensive powers of local self-government to all Communes



(Gemeinden), whether urban or rural. In this autonomy there were obvious political dangers for the authority of the Crown and the bureaucracy, and for the predominance of the German element throughout the State. Schmerling and his advisers, however, had a device on which they relied to avert these dangers. A highly peculiar method of election was introduced for the Provincial Diets (and thus indirectly for Parliament) which was designed to secure a German majority in all German-Slav territory, to make the Italians prevail in the Italo-Slavic coastal areas, and the Polish landowners in Ruthenian or Little-Russian Eastern Galicia. In each Crownland, side by side with every group elected from urban or rural districts, there was set up a special group of the great landowners, among whom the old noble families were permanently predominant. In urban divisions, the franchise was based on direct-taxation categories, so that in the mixed-language areas the German upper middle classes had a safe majority. In the same fashion, the political ascendancy of the German element in the towns of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, as well as in South Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, was secured by establishing three electoral bodies in the communal unit, each representing a third, not of the total electorate, but of the total payment of direct taxes, and so giving the majority to the upper and middle classes. A double object was thus achieved. The franchises granted by the new law remained in the hands of the middle class; the non-possessing classes were excluded; while the petty bourgeoisie and the peasant holders were made a minority. In this manner the excess of German coloring in local administration was preserved in all the towns of mixed nationality in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia as was on the coast, the Italian in the Slovenian and Croatian areas of the southeast.

This Constitution, promulgated and meant for the Empire as a whole, was applied only to its western half, since owing to the unanimous resistance of the Magyars Hungary was subjected to a new military absolutism. It caused no real diminution in the power of the Emperor or of the Viennese bureaucracy, although public opinion in Vienna and among the German upper classes generally set certain limits to their activity. Nevertheless, the introduction of autonomy in local administration paved the way for a far-reaching change in internal government and in the political outlook of the various peoples of the Monarchy. Czechs, Poles, Slovenes,

and Croats, with their homogeneous peasantry and small bourgeoisie, could now send representatives of their national intelligentsia to the Provincial Diets and to the Imperial Parliament, while the German bureaucracy and its ally, the German Liberal party, were obliged to depend for a parliamentary majority, and thus for power, on the electoral device which had given independent representation to the landowning nobles. Everything, therefore, hinged on the development of economic forces among the different nationalities. Once more, however, foreign policy and the arbitrament of force broke across the course of Austrian development.

#### *4. State Rule and Self-rule.*

THE War of 1866 was bound to affect the development of the constitutional simulacrum of 1861. Indeed, a year before the outbreak of hostilities foreign complications had obliged Francis Joseph to face the impossible situation which the Schmerling régime had created in Hungary. Schmerling resigned. The nomination of Count Belcredi, a member of the Conservative Bohemian aristocracy, as his successor represented an attempt to conciliate national, and especially Czech opposition to German centralism, and initiated a new effort to reach a compromise with the Magyars. The main lines of this had been laid down on both sides before war between Prussia and Austria had become unavoidable. After the victory of Prussia, and the consequent exclusion of Austria from the dissolved Germanic Confederation, the Emperor strove to achieve a final settlement of the constitutional problem. The price which the dynasty had to pay for a swift consolidation of its European power was the restoration of the independence of the Kingdom of Hungary and of its Constitution of 1848, subject only to a Magyar pledge to maintain the military and economic unity of the Empire as a whole. The Magyars accorded to the Emperor a sort of central imperial authority, expressed by recognizing the army and foreign policy as joint imperial concerns. The personal power of the Emperor was thus safeguarded in these two all-important spheres; but it was not without limitations, for while administration in Vienna was composed of joint or imperial ministers, appointed by the Emperor, the consent of Hungary's independent and purely parliamentary government had to be sought and found for all important acts. This was the first of two leading principles in the new "dualist"

organization of the so-called Empire. Henceforward the Habsburg Monarchy consisted of two equal States: Hungary on the one side, and on the other the unitary State generally known as Austria, comprising Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Galicia, Bukovina, the German hereditary lands of the dynasty, Dalmatia, the coastal regions, and Istria.

The second leading principle was that in the multiplicity of nations forming the Empire the imperial concept should be represented by the Magyars in the Hungarian State and by the Germans in the Austrian. These two races ought, therefore, to possess, if not a preferred status legally defined, at least some sort of effective hegemony over the other races concerned. The first of these principles made it possible for the Emperor to tolerate Dualism. What was later bitterly described in Vienna as "the Monarchy under notice to quit" was acceptable to the nobles, to the German upper classes, and to their political representatives, the German Liberal party and the Viennese bureaucracy, because they saw in it a means of securing the continuance of German ascendancy in the western half of the Empire, or the Dual Monarchy.

The first result of the legislation of 1867, creating the new Austria-Hungary, was that the Schmerling Constitution of 1861, temporarily suspended in 1865, was revived so far as Austria was concerned. More than that, it was forthwith given a liberal and liberating character by a series of new constitutional enactments. By such concessions to public opinion, and by the elevation of several members of the German Constitutional party to posts in the Ministry, the Crown purchased acceptance of the unilateral privileges which it had already granted to the Magyars on its own responsibility. These concessions transformed Hungary into an independent State on a legal equality with Austria, with which it enjoyed a favored relation, economically and politically; but they also made it, as events soon proved, a deciding partner in all questions of foreign policy.

This necessarily much abbreviated historical sketch may serve to indicate, in broad outline, how power was divided between the two independent States of the Empire down to its end, and what led to the development of the policies, both of the dynasty and its advisers, the higher bureaucracy, and of the parties in the Austrian Reichsrat. To give the record in detail would be to write the history



of Austria for the last fifty years. Here only those points in the dual system need be noted which bear on the Austrian system of government and administration.

The all-important fact is that the parallel systems of organization and administration set up by the Schmerling Constitution in 1861—bureaucratic centralization and autonomy—continued unaltered until the fall of the Empire. The old Central Government, henceforth confined to the non-Hungarian territories, was directed by the Imperial Cabinet in Vienna, and was coördinated in provincial and district authorities throughout the realm; the limited system of autonomous local administration, built up within it, was expressed through the provincial diets and boards, and the separate institutions which they directed, and through the local control of the several urban and rural communes. Provincial administration emanated from diets and communal councils, and had strictly circumscribed functions, of which the most important were communal taxation and primary and intermediate education. For half a century this remarkable double organization remained unaltered in structure and constitutional basis, despite the growing needs and changed political conditions of the period. Its peculiarity lay in the simultaneous functioning of two distinct administrative systems resting on conflicting ideas and operating within one and the same State. Their combined efficacy was rendered feasible only by the authority of the Crown and the power of central officialdom.

By means of the district authorities (*Bezirkshauptmannschaften*), that is, of State officials, assigned to such local positions the Imperial Government was able to penetrate and more or less to supervise local administration from top to bottom. The Central Government stood throughout for the ideas and traditions of the old, authoritarian, magisterial régime, based on the exclusive right and the moral obligation of the overlord, or absolute ruler, to watch over his people and to control their social existence. Protection of the weak, rigid maintenance of justice and police powers, provision for economic progress and efficiency, defense of the Monarchy from external danger, and insistence on the people's loyal service to the dynasty and on their political obedience to the Government in the interest of the realm (*i.e.*, the Dynastic State) as a whole—these were the great guiding concepts of the governmental system born of the reforms of Maria Theresa and her son Joseph. Over against them

stood another group of ideas, derived from Liberalism and its conception of the modern Democratic State. These found their pivot in the rights of the citizen, as expressed through autonomy in province, district, and commune, to manage his own affairs within a given area, communal duties being performed by the voluntary service of freely elected individuals, and the costs being defrayed by communal rates and taxes levied on the population thus served.

After 1861, therefore, Austria revealed two totally distinct conceptions of public life and of the nature and basis of the functions of the State. For half a century they operated side by side, not, it is true, without friction, thus doubtless limiting and lessening the efficiency of each, but, at the same time, with some measure of success. If the central administration of the State and its authority over the autonomous bodies lost grip, both in Bohemia and in the southern domains, in the decade preceding the War, the cause was not so much discord between these two systems as an ever increasing bitterness of nationalist strife, with a consequent decline in public spirit in Government and Parliament, and the failing appeal of the old Austrian idea.

Some years before the outbreak of the conflict, nationalist quarrels and obstruction in Reichsrat and Diets caused the suspension of autonomous administration in some areas, and its replacement by a dictatorship. On this there will be more to be said, but it must be prefaced by a brief account of the organization and methods of the two systems as they worked side by side until the breakdown.

##### *5. Organization, Functions, and Character of State Administration up to the Outbreak of War.*

AFTER the reforms initiated in the 'fifties and completed by the Constitutional Laws of 1867, no further change took place in the structure of the State. Nevertheless, the introduction of ministerial responsibility and the rights of control over government and administration assigned to the Central Parliament led to developments in the political, jurisdictional, and administrative management of the machine which were subversive of the old Austrian view that the activity of all imperial office-holders was exclusively related to the Sovereign. Technically, even after the promulgation of the new Constitution, all authorities and officials were supposed to be carrying out "political" functions. The activities of the so-called "politi-



cal officers" or servants of the Government, were, in the widest sense of the term, those of "good police" in the service of a supreme ruler. Each individual official had to answer for his actions, first to his superior, and, in the last resort, to the Emperor. Actually, however, on the granting of the Constitution, the Minister at the head of each Department of State was responsible not only to his supreme overlord, the Emperor, but also to Parliament, so that it was possible for the representative body to make this responsibility at least morally effective through parliamentary pressure. Thus, in extreme cases, a minister could be compelled to resign, either after an address in either house of Parliament or, in case of impeachment, after condemnation, on the ground of some illegal action, by the majority of a special judicial tribunal. The latter expedient was never adopted; and there were very few cases where a minister was compelled to resign by a direct vote of want of confidence on specific grounds. During the entire reign of Francis Joseph, including the constitutional period, the whole mechanism of authorities and departments continued to be an instrument by which through his ministers the monarch exercised an exclusively personal sovereignty. Constitutionally, this was sound enough; for while the Law of 1867 expressly adopted the principle of division of powers, it specifically designated the Emperor as the executive wielder of power. On the individual citizen compulsion could be exercised neither by Parliament, nor by a diet, nor by the other autonomous bodies, but was confined to the imperial and royal political officers and to the judgments of the courts, which looked to the Emperor as to the sole dispenser of judicial power. It is true that the independence of the judiciary was expressly laid down in the Constitution; but the crown attorneys or attorneys of the State (*Procureurs*) exercised great influence in the courts in cases of a political character. Thus, from the standpoint of practical politics, administrative power remained formally concentrated in the hands of the monarch, though actually vested in the Government and its organs, since the ministers through whom the Emperor was constitutionally bound to exercise authority were chosen exclusively by him, and were usually selected from the regular civil service: that is, as a matter of fact the monopoly of power was maintained in principle in the constitutional period, although leaders of parliamentary parties or apparently unbureaucratic experts were occasionally nominated as heads of individual

ministries. Notwithstanding incidental parliamentary successes, Francis Joseph could to the last maintain the view that it was for him to appoint and dismiss ministers, and that parliamentary government, in any real sense, neither could nor should exist in Austria. In modern society, where government is not carried on upon lines of strict parliamentary responsibility, it must necessarily be conducted administratively; exercised, that is to say, by the actual holder of power. In the case before us, power resided in the Crown, the bureaucracy and the army, backed by the resources of a mighty organization of departments, institutions, and executive forces, ready to execute the decrees of the bureaucracy which nominally advised the monarch, but which actually ruled.

The backbone of State administration was supplied by the subordinate political authorities of the Ministry of the Interior. These were (1) the "Public Authorities," *i.e.*, the provincial governments or "Landesregierungen," (2) the "District Authorities," including, especially after 1868, the government offices known as the *Bezirkshauptmannschaften*, which comprised as the smallest area of State administration two or three court districts. The most important of their many weighty responsibilities was that of acting as State police, which they did under the provincial governments. Through the District Authorities the entire system of State administration was organically connected with the other great system, that of autonomous self-government. Between the Austrian constitutional system and that of all the other States that had developed out of the old German Empire, the great differences were that actual local administration was entrusted in some thousands of communes to the communal bodies, *i.e.*, to freely elected communal councils and to the burgomasters whom these councils, in turn, freely elected. Furthermore, over these self-governing bodies there was in Austria no effective administrative supervision either by the Government, or by the District or Provincial Authorities. Their responsibility was confined to maintaining a strict legalism in the functioning of the communes and their agencies. On this ground, if a citizen complained that in any decision taken or decree passed by a town or communal council or magistrate a law had been transgressed they were entitled to intervene, to undertake inquiries, and, if an action had been illegal, to nullify it. At the same time the District Authorities had the weight and prestige belonging to officers, who, to

the people, represented the imperial executive. They had, practically, to see to the execution of those orders and decrees that were issued by the "Statthalter" or governors in the Crownlands, and covered almost every aspect of State activity; and, furthermore, as courts of first instance, they promulgated decisions regarding the primary rights of the individual citizen—such as his parliamentary and communal franchise, his rights as a trader and householder, as a user of water, and so forth—and they ruled upon all sorts of civic duties and privileges.

The old Austrian District Authority, the *Bezirkshauptmannschaft*, was, in fact, an administrative creation whose roots go back to the circuit courts set up in the time of Maria Theresa and Joseph II as the historic agencies of imperial power, and to the popular legislation of the Regents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As such, District Authorities possessed far-reaching police powers. During the reaction after 1848, the newly established District Authorities and their police became first and foremost the agencies used for administrative supervision, and for the repression of political and national activities; but when the constitutional principle was introduced after 1867 their administrative and quasi-judicial functions were combined with that of the most trusted agency of the Central Government for the purpose of furthering its dominant but periodically changing political and national tendencies. They became, therefore, a sort of support for the "higher police" system, and thus were exposed at all times, and especially when political and national strife developed, to the danger of conflict with whole classes and masses of the people.

Besides serving the Ministry of the Interior, the District Authorities formed the link between the Executive and the different State departments. Thus the District Authorities were entrusted with the actual levying and collection of the direct taxes. The Ministry of Finance was a twofold hierarchy, with many ramifications. In each of the Crownlands there was a national department of finance as the intermediate authority, and under it were district departments of finance to collect duties, customs taxes, and taxes on consumption. The Ministry of Trade rested on an organization of Chambers of Commerce, based on the principle of self-government by representatives of the business and commercial world; and it also controlled the postal and telegraph services. The Ministry of Railways was



similarly constituted, with the territorial system of the State lines between it and the management and the technical departments of the railways. Primary and secondary education was peculiarly organized. Again on the principle of self-government there was built up a group of educational authorities: the local, district, and provincial school boards. Coördinated first of all with the political District Authorities and the Provincial governments, and carrying on their work under the direction of the District Authorities and the Governor, they were subject in the last resort to the Minister of Public Instruction.

Central administration, in its turn, was concentrated in ten separate departmental ministries, those of the Interior, Finance, Culture and Instruction, Agriculture, Justice, Railways, Public Works, Health, Social Welfare, and Trade. In addition, for Galicia there was a Minister without Portfolio, who was a Pole, and who occupied an exceptional position. The Prime Minister, who presided at meetings of the Cabinet, and who was sometimes also Minister of the Interior, controlled all questions of policy. In the last two decades before the War, it became customary for him and his department to supervise the daily handling of important political and administrative questions in whatever department of state they might arise. Outwardly this was no innovation since it had always been the practice in Austria for the Cabinet to handle problems of administration; and it was the duty of every minister or department head to submit to the Cabinet all important documents which required royal assent, after being drawn up and corrected in detail. Thus over a wide range of public and private issues which more or less affected the Government as a whole the Cabinet was constantly called on to give final decisions. Its authority covered the civil service in general, the rights of different classes of officials, and the filling of higher posts in the service of the State. Within the strongly centralized State system, accordingly, there developed a special centralization in the Prime Minister, this evolution being powerfully assisted by parliamentary conditions, notably after the fall of the Taaffe Ministry in 1893. The Imperial and Royal Government, composed to a man of bureaucrats, was obliged somehow to get a majority in a House torn by national divisions. One result of this was that the Prime Minister, taking on himself always more and more the formulation and control of policy, was both the decisive adviser of the

Crown and politically the "universal minister." He tended to monopolize the political element in the administration. When a purely administrative issue in a particular ministry, sometimes trifling enough in itself, touched the interests of one or more political parties, he would take the matter out of the sphere of the minister in question and settle it, either alone or on the basis of a cabinet decision.

All this will serve to illustrate the excessive centralization which characterized Austrian administration as a whole and which was recognized long before the fall of the Empire by wide-awake critics and reformers at home. Among other evils it produced an intricacy of administrative procedure, resulting in excessive officialdom and ever increasing friction and resistance, within the official machine, in the settlement of any and every question. Bad enough in current business, this became a much more serious thing in the larger task of dealing with the interests of national and social groups. A contributory cause of delays and of the overloading of the administration was the yoking together, as already described, of two systems which were distinct formally as well as constitutionally: the State administration proper, directed from Vienna, and the autonomous provincial and communal system. The latter, as it existed in each part of the realm, culminating in the Provincial Diet and Provincial Board, rested administratively in part on the communes and in part on the Permanent Executive Committee of the Provincial Diet. Constitutionally independent of the State authorities, it was managed directly by the political or national parties—in the provinces by the Executive Boards (*Landesausschüsse*), and in the communes by the town or parish councils and their burgomasters and reeves (*Gemeindevorsteher*). Most of the laws passed by the Diets, and much modern imperial legislation, for example, enactments dealing with building, street construction, rights of way, sanitation, agriculture, forestry, etc., contemplated a complicated coöperation between the State authorities in the Crownlands and the Provincial Boards. In other words, the business of autonomous administration could be carried out only with the formal assistance of the Central Government and its Provincial Boards. This naturally did not make for the rapid execution of business.

These weaknesses, like others felt later, were not noticeable so long as the political conditions of the Constitution of 1867 remained



in force; so long, that is, as its political exponents, the German Liberal bureaucracy, in alliance with a German Liberal majority in Parliament, were strong both in the country and at Court, and so long as German Liberal party leaders regularly participated in Governments as ministers. With this majority behind it, the bureaucracy, German in spirit and in personnel, built up a powerful administration and found no difficulty in making the general policy of the center effective in the territories, thanks to the fact that the Schmerling Constitution, and its creation, the group of great landowners, secured German majorities in the autonomous Diets. During the period of the ascendancy of German Liberalism in Austria, much was done to realize and safeguard the main principle of continental Liberalism, the personal freedom of the individual as against the State. From 1861 onward, as we have seen, a considerable part of internal government was autonomous in principle; and since it was carried on through the local self-governing bodies of province or Crownland, district or commune, it was free from the influence of the State, *i.e.*, of the central bureaucracy. Moreover, the activity of State authorities was limited, in many departments of social life, by legislative reforms; and the Constitution of 1867 materially restricted their interference in the citizen's political, social, and professional freedom of movement, an intervention which had been practically unlimited under the old police régime.

It is true that criticism had made itself heard even then both in Parliament and outside, particularly against the "double track" system of public administration which resulted from local autonomy. Such animadversions, however, generally came from those in close touch with the bureaucracy, who consistently opposed all recognition of a claim on the part of the people as a whole to any share in administration, and who refused to face the fact that popular local government was a necessary consequence of modern liberal institutions and legislative freedom. Another source of such criticism was the high respect which Austrian Germans entertained for Prussia after 1866, and for Prussian Germany after 1870. The higher levels of the bureaucracy were strongly represented in the great German Liberal Constitutional party of Austria, and the leading political men of the time contrasted Austrian conditions, to their disadvantage, with the rigidly centralized organization of the German States and, above all, of Prussia. Comparing the far inferior condi-

tion of Austrian municipal government with the remarkable economic and cultural progress of town administration in Germany, following the rapid development of its great cities, they were inclined to attribute success, in the one case, to the existence there of non-political municipal authorities headed by expert officials, leading the town councillors, and legally subordinated to the State, and to ascribe failure, in the other, to the fact that in Austria municipal administration was democratic and that town councils enjoyed great freedom from the Central Government.

Broadly speaking, Austrian administration in the period of Liberal German ascendancy presented a picture of political and executive unity. A rich fund of popular authority had been accumulated before 1848 by the old paternal government and in the absolutist era which followed; and the present régime had this support to aid it. Resistance was, however, beginning to make itself felt where the growth of nationalism among non-German peoples was teaching them to look upon the Government as representative of German dominance, and was turning their hearts against it. This was the case in the Italian provinces before 1848, and was markedly evident, after the introduction of constitutionalism, in the purely or preponderatingly Czech parts of Bohemia and Moravia and in Galicia. Openly or secretly, the educated classes among the Slavs were hostile. In Galicia, despite the failure of the rebellions in 1848 and 1863, the nobility was still the sole effective political factor among the Poles. There the Government had always been the protector of the peasants, and had stood for them against the nobles since 1846. Among the Czechs, the tradition of 1848 was at once revived in 1861, and the position which then was taken, quickly spread among the people. In 1863 the National party walked out of the Imperial Parliament, and in 1867 it did not at first appear in Parliament at all. On the other hand, the attitude of the Polish nobility to the Viennese Government began to alter after 1868. In consonance with the wishes of Francis Joseph, the ruling German Liberal party sought to constitute a working majority in the House by an alliance with the Poles. Between 1867 and 1871, concessions were made to them, and as the price of modifications in their policy, the Poles acquired a considerable measure of autonomy for Galicia.

One change remains to be mentioned in this period which deeply affected administration both by the State authorities and by the

autonomous corporations of the individual Crownlands. In 1876, a comprehensive law introduced into Austria the institution of administrative justice (*droit administratif*) already established in most of the great states of the German Empire. A special tribunal was created in Vienna, before which any citizen might lodge a legal complaint if he considered that his rights had been violated or contravened by any administrative act of a State or autonomous authority. In case the Court held that the petitioner had suffered injury the administrative order or decree complained of was immediately suspended; and the ruling of the Court governed the administrative officers in their further dealings with the case. The purpose was to ensure legal and uniform public administration throughout the entire State, and to reduce to the smallest limits the arbitrary element in the functioning of authorities. As time was to prove, it was one of the most significant and fruitful reforms in Austrian public life. It carried with it the creation of a new bond of juridical unity, not only linking together the constitutionally "autonomous" kingdoms and territories making up the State, but also constituting a tie that realized in the most perfect fashion one of the fundamental concepts of the modern "legal State," or "*Rechtsstaat*."

#### *6. The Administration and the Strife of Nationalities.*

THE creation of the Taaffe Ministry heralded the fall of the German Liberal majority and the initiation of a process of far-reaching change in administration which, though gradual at first, proceeded at a steadily accelerating pace. The new Government, which held office for half a generation, from 1878 to 1893, was the most long-lived of any during the reign of Francis Joseph. It called into being a new parliamentary majority by a coalition of Polish, Czech, and South Slav parties, with the feudal wing of the nobles, and representatives of the strongly Catholic peasants of the Alpine regions; and its position was soon consolidated by a series of reforms which granted considerable extensions of the franchise. The political key to this epoch was the open determination of the Crown to undermine the German Liberal party. Count Taaffe relied upon a slogan that, vague as it seemed, proved of immense carrying power: the principle of autonomy, which formed the basis of the programs alike of the old Czechs, the feudal nobles, and the South Slav and Polish parties. With this he connected the postulate of the equality of nationalities



before the law, accepted in principle at the time of the Constitution of 1867. At that time, of course, the formula was interpreted as subject to the maintenance of the bureaucratically organized unitary State, and of German predominance within it.

In the strife now to rage between Germans and non-Germans around this postulate of equality for nationalities, both on the floor of the House and throughout the nation, it became abundantly clear that the very existence of Austria as a unit, and of the "State" itself, was bound up with the central position of the bureaucracy and its system of mediate and intermediate authorities, organized and controlled from Vienna. This view, as put forward by the higher officials, by the Court, and by the army, was whole-heartedly endorsed by the liberal-minded majority of Austrian Germans. When they demanded of the Government the recognition and protection of German as the official language, they were expressing, in peculiar fashion, their fundamental conviction that Austria could exist only on condition that the centralized, dynastic, authoritarian State represented a hegemony of Germans analogous to that possessed in Hungary by the Magyars. Against this stood the Slavs, with their insistence on an autonomous and federal State which should give full scope for the development of their national culture, and should be expressed in practice by the recognition of their languages in State administration, education, and the courts. The "struggle for the State" was, therefore, on the one hand a battle of non-German nations for their language-rights, and, on the other, of Germans to maintain the privileged position of their own language. Henceforth and down to the outbreak of the War this was the central point in the national strife. From the outset, the prize was the State organization. Any alteration in the official language must necessarily entail not merely a change, but a transformation of the historic form of authoritarian administration; and must by undermining the idea on which the State had developed since 1748 endanger and ultimately destroy it. Every inroad made by the non-German languages strengthened the national position of the races speaking them. The appointment of increasing numbers of consciously nationalist, non-German officials to posts under the State—an inevitable result of the legalization of the use of non-German languages in the courts and administration—was bound to give the Slavs an increasing hold on the bureaucracy and so on power. In the same way, there was an



unavoidable extension and development of national schools, a national press, and national literature—in a word, of the cultural status of every non-German nationality.

The results here briefly outlined were actually brought about by the process of emancipation of the non-German races which Count Taaffe initiated when he let loose the battle of languages. This was the lasting result of his conciliation epoch, and it was fatal for the Habsburg realm. To recount its phases would be to write the history of Austria; here it must suffice to give a few indications of its effects on the Government and the administrative system.

In the first place, the Taaffe Government represented a great shift in power both as between nations and classes. Although the Government depended for its majority on the support of the Conservative wing of the nobles, including the great landowners of the Sudetic lands, the Franchise Law of 1885 was undoubtedly democratic in effect. The lowering of the property qualifications gave increased importance and influence to the lower middle classes in Vienna and in the provincial towns, to shopkeepers, artisans, and working class householders. In Vienna Dr. Karl Lueger inaugurated a remarkable movement among them. In election after election they gained at the expense of the upper classes, who were led by great industrialists, professional men, and, above all, by lawyers, doctors, and the higher-grade teachers. A combination was effected between the social-reform elements in the Catholic Conservative ranks and the popular anti-Semitic agitation among the lower middle class. Dr. Karl Lueger's Christian Socialist party attacked the strong economic and social hold of the Jews, who had rapidly grown in number, especially in Vienna. There, and in the other towns of lower Austria, within a few years, the old Liberal party was practically destroyed. In the Alpine towns, and in the German portions of Bohemia, a similar grouping of forces, with a strong nationalist tinge, led to the formation of the middle-class German National party, which was at once anti-Clerical and anti-Liberal. This group finally separated itself from the German Liberals, although it joined with the older group, which retained a considerable measure of strength down to the beginning of the 'nineties, in the fight against Count Taaffe's policy of "racial reconciliation," and in opposition to his clerical Slav majority in Parliament. In Bohemia and Moravia, on the other hand, national and social Radicalism, long

marked among the Czechs, was so powerfully reinforced by the Franchise Law of 1885 that by the early 'nineties the old Czech Conservative party, which had been dominant for a quarter of a century, was crushed at the election for the Diet, just as the new National party swept away the old Liberals among the Germans. Finally, in the late 'eighties, the Marxist agitation, carried on under the gifted leadership of Dr. Victor Adler, made the Social Democratic party an effective political force, and Austria soon saw the strange phenomenon of Czechs, Germans, and Poles working side by side in a single international party. At this period the rise of Social Democracy helped to bring the idea of social reform to the front; and Count Taaffe's connection with the Conservatives also helped to carry him in the same direction.

Representatives of the Catholic peasantry, protagonists in the struggle of the craftsman against modern industrialism, and class-conscious nobles united with an openly Conservative group within the higher bureaucracy in a common fight against Liberal industrialism, capitalism, and agnosticism. State socialism, as promoted by Count Bismarck in his nationalization of the railways, his creation of a system of State insurance for workmen, and State regulation of industrial relations, gave a powerful stimulus to similar action in Austria. After the first movement, the political and social reforms of the Taaffe Government were half-hearted enough; but they served inevitably to weaken the power and prestige of German nationality in the mixed-language areas, inasmuch as they encouraged the rise of the great Slav sections in the towns. This was, in fact, the object of the Court and of the Prime Minister, supported by the Emperor. At the same time, the national idea became a stronger and stronger element in the resistance of the Austrian Germans to the Taaffe system. The old Liberal Constitutional party alienated the entire younger generation of German Austrians which grew up after 1870, especially outside Vienna, and which included students in the secondary schools and universities, because it seemed to them thoroughly retrograde both politically and socially; they felt its politics to be too purely dynastic and not sufficiently national. Another section of educated young Germans, notably among the Jews, were antipathetic to the modern emphasis on race as developed in Prussian Germany and as identified there and in Austria with the national idea. They began to go over to Marxian Social Democracy.

This complicated network of tendencies, which between 1876 and 1898 permanently transformed political life and which began to bring the great masses of the people into politics, profoundly affected Austrian administration, in regard both to the new tasks that were set it, and to the official machine itself. The characteristic mark of Austrian legislation at this period is common with that of almost every other European State, was the amazing variety of State activities and the extending area of modern State administration. Here, especially during the Trade regime, the falling away from Liberalism of great sections of the population led more markedly than elsewhere to an effort to meet the social ills resulting from capitalism.

The entire economic structure of the Austrian domain made the lower middle classes, the artisans, and the small tradesman, potent social factors. They were supported by that section of the nobles' party which accepted the doctrine, worked out by Catholic politicians in Germany, of the necessity of returning to a social hierarchy based upon Christian ethics, and which believed that the best hope for improvement in social conditions was resistance to the forces of Free Trade and large-scale production and exchange. These things, in their view, were destroying the middle class. The practical outcome of all this was a complicated series of legislative measures designed to guard the trading and other rights of the "small man," as the craftsman, small trader, and other representatives of the lower middle classes began to be called. The protection and maintenance of historic forms of small-scale trading, selling and industry, including agriculture, by means of a complex system of state inspection, special concessions, and general interference with the individual freedom which the previous generation had held sacred—such was the principal remedy of Austria's Conservative social politicians. The new so-called "social" police legislation, together with the new system of workmen's insurance introduced on the German model, meant an immense increase in the work of the Ministry of the Interior, cast a fresh burden on the civil service, and led to the creation of endless offices and bureaus. The Departments mainly affected were those of the Interior and of Trade. Between 1880 and 1900—again on the German model—the railways which in Austria had been almost exclusively built and operated by private capital were taken over by the State, partly under the influence of socialist



ideas and partly for military reasons. This created a vast additional army of State servants, some clerical and others technical, and led to the establishment of a special transport bureaucracy, staffed, like that of other departments, largely by men of legal and expert technical training, and concentrated in the Ministry of Railways and in their actual operation. At the same time the great economic development of the country, beginning in the late 'eighties, together with the new fulness of public life and the intensity of social and national strife, necessitated a strengthening and extension of the existing organization of the so-called "political authorities" which were concerned, as has been shown, with police, justice and local administration.

The Taaffe régime followed the good old tradition of conducting the central administration as inexpensively and efficiently as possible. Official salaries remained substantially lower than those earned by comparable services in trade or industry; the social status, privileged position, and security of tenure of the civil servant still formed a considerable element of his wages; the honorable position of the imperial official, recognized as such by the masses, continued to secure a more than adequate supply of efficient men. Thanks to the thrifty financing of the time, the increased cost of the extended civil service could be met without difficulty. It was not till the turn of the century that one dangerous symptom after another began to appear in this connection.

An inevitable result of the Government's stressing of nationality was a change within the personnel of the civil service and in the mixed-language sections of the realm, though its most important consequences hardly appeared upon the surface. They date from the Language Ordinances of the years 1880 to 1881, which sought to provide for the realization of the constitutional declarations as to the equality of races and languages in district and provincial administration, and in the courts of first and second instance. Although the use of German as the official language had never been formally prescribed, it was so used in fact; and the practical result of the declarations was an attempt to diminish its use. Thus these Taaffe Ordinances permitted non-Germans in the Slav lands of the north, west, and south to employ their mother tongue in the local government offices and in the courts, and bound these government offices and courts to issue their decrees and findings in the language of



the party or of the documents in the case. Though the above Ordinances were never issued in legislative form, they remained unaltered despite years of German resistance.

In the territories affected—Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Southern Styria, Carniola, Carinthia, Gorizia, and Istria—the result was a division, hardly perceptible from outside, within the ranks of the judicial, political, and financial officials, and the teachers of the higher-grade schools; although, of course, they all remained formally organized in a common service, within which the only recognized distinction was that of grades in service. In Bohemia and Moravia, this trend in policy threw open opportunities to the younger generation of Czechs by which they eagerly profited. The new Czech University of Prague, established in opposition to the older German foundation, as well as the secondary schools of Bohemia and Moravia, where instruction was given in Czech, began to send out year by year growing crowds of young lawyers, doctors, engineers, secondary-school teachers, and other candidates for intellectual professions, anxious for the most part to find employment in the civil service and readily appointed by the authorities. The general advance in Czech and South Slav culture was accompanied by a rapid and significant growth in the number of technical and higher educational institutions, readily financed by a government majority largely composed of Slavs. From this time on, hundreds of approved students of Czech and Slovene nationality were placed in the various schools and other institutions, provided partly by the communes, partly by the autonomous corporations of Bohemia, Moravia, and Carniola, and partly by the State. Thus, within little more than a decade, there was a noteworthy forward movement among the Czechs and a similar though less marked gain among the Slovenes and Croats of the South. Until the very end of the Empire, however, the South Slavs failed to secure a national university, and this was the gravest obstacle in their way.

At the same time, there was a great expansion in autonomous administration. Under the Taaffe régime, the Czechs won complete control over the Prague Town Council. In the Bohemian Diet, moreover, the shift in political power as between the two nobles' parties, dominated by the Court, made it possible to build up a strong coalition of the Czech Nationalist party and the Conservative nobility. Further, in all the hitherto mixed-language towns of central and

southern Bohemia, the town councils showed majorities corresponding with the national majority in the country, despite the continued existence of the system of three voting classes. Nor was this the case in Bohemia and Moravia alone: in all the other territories, with the possible exception of Istria and Dalmatia, there was at this time a progressive development of the autonomous local and national administrative bodies and of a new officialdom, soon to be numbered by thousands, to carry that administration into effect. Where there was a Slav majority, this naturally meant an immediate increase in the Slav official element and a consequent stimulation of Czech, Slovene, or Polish social life. As the economic conditions of the middle classes and of the peasants began to improve, a highly differentiated bourgeois class in the modern sense of the term also began for the first time to grow up among the Slav peoples. The steadily growing State and local official class formed the core of an expanding professional section, which was soon to be strengthened by recruits from those who passed from Slav educational institutions into employment in various technical and professional capacities, or into industry, then in a period of rapid expansion.

To analyze this process and its political effects would be interesting. Here, however, it must suffice to deal with it only in so far as it affected and transmuted the spirit of Austrian government and administration. The immediate effect of the rise of the Slav nationalities, with their increasing participation in government and administration, was the replacement of Germans by non-Germans, and especially by Slavs, throughout the civil service. This inevitably caused a weakening of the State principle, as worked out and expressed by the German bureaucracy.

In this connection a word must be added regarding the part played by Poland. We have already seen that during the ascendancy of the German Constitutional party the Poles had acquired a special provincial autonomy in Galicia as the price for their support. Both the Germans who bestowed this autonomy and the Poles who received it regarded it as the right and privilege of only one of the two races of almost equal strength who inhabited the country. The Poles kept the Ruthenians, later known as Ukrainians, in complete subjection, and thus began a strife between these two Slav nations that lasted without intermission to the end of the Empire. It was exacerbated by historic religious differences—first, between the strongly Catholic

Poles and the western branch of the Little Russian race, belonging to the Greek Uniate Church; and, second, between the Ruthenians of Galicia and the rigid, non-Uniate orthodoxy of the great majority of the Ukrainian people, with Kiev as their center. Throughout the last two generations of Austrian history this hopeless struggle between Poles and Ruthenians dragged on, although the introduction of democratic reforms, and particularly the extension of the franchise, temporarily improved the position of the latter. From the standpoint of Austrian administration, the most important result of this specialized Galician autonomy was that Polish now became the official language in that area. The use of German was confined to the army and to the railway service, and was continually being restricted even there. Throughout the country the civil service was speedily and thoroughly Polonized. After 1878, Count Taaffe's Government had to rely for parliamentary support on the Polish Club, which, so far as Parliament was concerned, represented Poland in Austria; and the Poles secured another highly important concession. A permanent special Ministry was set up for Galicia, or, in other words, to uphold the interests of the Poles in the Cabinet. Anything touching Galicia, no matter in what Ministry it arose, necessarily passed through the hands of this Minister, who was therefore in a position to survey and control all the relations between the Governor of Galicia and the Government at Vienna. The statesman known in Parliament as the "Galician Minister" was regularly chosen by the Polish Club from among its parliamentary leaders; the name of the person they selected was then submitted to the Emperor by the Prime Minister, and was invariably accepted without question. Since, in practice, the Governor of Galicia was also nominated by the Emperor in accordance with the wishes of the Polish members of the Reichsrat, the administrative control over a country containing more than two-fifths of the population of Austria was exclusively concentrated in the hands of the Polish nobles.

Until universal suffrage was introduced in 1907, these nobles did what they liked with the middle-class and peasant members both in the Galician Diet and in the Viennese Parliament. The result of this was to remove Galicia, to all intents and purposes, from the administrative domination of Vienna. Moreover, the civil service within that country fell increasingly under the control of the holders of political power there—the nobles and the Conservative allies among



the peasants and the middle class, such as it was. The Galician Minister represented the Poles in the central administration and exercised a decisive influence in all imperial questions affecting Polish interests. In course of time he entirely prevented the Viennese bureaucracy from exercising any effective interference in Galician affairs. Before long, he had placed officials of Polish nationality in the higher positions of the civil service in all the departmental Ministries, so that within their staffs they formed a sort of Polish enclave which, under his invisible direction, watched over the interests of Polish citizens in Galicia and throughout the Empire. Poles were found, moreover, at the head of important branches in the great government departments, notably those of Finance and of the Interior. In fact, Poland actually controlled the machinery of State, especially during the years when a Pole, Professor Dunajewski, was Minister of Finance for Austria. It was thus the first of the Slav nations to force its way into the historic sanctuary of the Viennese bureaucracy, built up by German statesmen and jurists and held for more than a century by the German noble and educated classes.

The beginning of this breach in German ascendancy had been made, strangely enough, by a Government dependent on German Liberals, that of Prince Adolf Auersperg. After the failure of the plans of the Hohenwart-Schaeffle Ministry of 1871 for a federal reconstruction of the Empire, the Emperor, much against his will, had been compelled to call on him. At the time, the far-reaching consequences of the creation of the Galician Ministry were hardly perceived. With a curious shortsightedness, German politicians failed both then and long afterward to envisage the possibility of any other type of administration in Austria than one of German complexion, controlled by Germans according to German ideas.

The historic contribution of the Taaffe régime was, first, the rapid erection of a Polish hegemony in Galicia and the encouragement of a national government detached from the main body of the imperial and royal administration, and second, the introduction of a similar process in the territories of the Czechs and South Slavs. This was not confined to making a Czech deputy Minister of Justice; and it was he who promulgated the Language Ordinances of 1880 and produced the consequent alterations in the personnel of the numerous district courts and tribunals throughout Bohemia. The right of Czechs, Croats, and Slovenes to a share in the direction



of public affairs and to positions in the civil service became recognized and settled. Men openly professing Czech or Slovene Nationalism, and actively identified with nationalist politics, were appointed to administrative and judicial positions. The number of Slav judges in the superior and supreme tribunals steadily increased, and the demands of Czech and South Slav deputies for the promotion to Vienna of the higher judicial and administrative officials in their provinces began timidly to be met.

The views of the main body of German Austrians on the Taaffe policy of racial equality, and the entry of the Slav intelligentsia into the civil service, may be read in the official reports of parliamentary debates and in those of the Bohemian, Moravian, Silesian, and Carniolan Diets, which, from 1878, resounded with the most animated oratory. They show the Germans battling against the Government and the non-German majority in the Prague Diet, and record the gloomy vaticinations of their party leaders on the ruin in which the Government's policy would involve the State. Their struggle was vain. The first positive advance was registered when the two German Bohemian leaders, Ernst von Plener and Dr. Schmeykal, succeeded in formulating a compromise which aimed at securing peace in Bohemia by dividing the autonomous administration into two. But the initial steps in this program had scarcely been taken, as the result of an understanding between the Old Czech party, under the great Czech leader, Dr. Rieger, and the Moderate National German Liberals, when the wildest storm broke out in the National and Radical Young Czech party. It had crushed the so-called Moderate National party among the Czechs at the polls, and thus had barred the way to any future compromise legislation in Bohemia and Moravia. This took place in 1890 to 1891, some time after the passing of laws which were to prove highly beneficial and which created special autonomous administrative organs in the Province for the two races of Bohemia. No understanding could be reached on the basic questions of language and official appointment in the civil service, so that the fight went ruthlessly on, not only in Parliament, but also in the Diets of Prague and Brünn, and among the people as well.

During this whole epoch the attitude of the ruling bureaucracy was quite different from that of the politicians. Closely scanned, however, it will be found to correspond more nearly to the nature

of the institutions than the extreme intransigence of the German parliamentarians. At the time, the Vienna bureaucracy consisted—apart from Slav “interlopers”—of a compact body of high officials, who, as young lawyers, had received their political education in the best period of the Austrian German Universities (during the ’sixties and ’seventies in the case of Vienna) and had then been given their political education by men who had served under Bruck, Lasser, Schmerling, and the older Plener, Baron von Lichtenfels, and the other great Austrian administrators of the ’fifties and ’sixties. From these men they had inherited the old “Josephine” tradition at its best and in all its purity. Politically this was strongly dynastic; in economic and social questions it was liberal, German nationalist, anti-ultramontane, and thoroughly humane. From the beginning of the nineteenth century it had been the habit of the “haute bureaucratie” of Vienna to recruit itself from within, and thus a constant stream of cadets from families long associated in the official hierarchy entered the State service, there to be educated and formed to carry on its work, and prize its standards. Many a noted talent was thus attracted to the State service, and above all, the fine tradition of the Austrian higher civil service was maintained and cherished.

Alexander Bach’s reforms, however, gave the Austrian officials new and very difficult tasks throughout the realm, and broadened the road by which talent, knowledge, and efficiency led to State service in the case of sons of parents far remote from the social hierarchy, and that without any particular family influence or support from anyone “inside.” Vienna was thus recruited from Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, as well as from purely German territory, with young men from the middle classes—from the families, for example, of teachers, provincial officials, and army officers—and also, to some extent, from the lower middle classes and the peasants—notably among the Slav applicants for civil service appointments. Practical experience in the provinces was then followed by transference to the central State Departments. Nothing shows the vitality of the Austrian bureaucracy more clearly than the way in which it was able to amalgamate completely this new and youthful personnel, to afford scope to new forces, and, at the same time, to hold unwaveringly to its own tradition in all major questions of State policy and to maintain its own conception of the nature of the civil service and

of the immovable standards of Austrian internal administration. The veritable pillars of the entire governmental and official system were certain principles fixed during decades of governmental practice and applying to everyone who came into contact with it. Rigid maintenance of procedure, including a strict observance of the rights and spheres of the individual authorities, absolute obedience to those above them, the preservation of the strictest silence in the outside world upon all matters of public policy, and a regard, admitting of no exception whatsoever, for the authority of the State, that is to say, of their particular imperial department, in every case and in every respect,—these were some of the more important of these principles. Throughout the entire century, Austrian higher officialdom was further characterized by an exceedingly definite conception of the duty of every public official, and notably of those in the most responsible positions, to put the interests of the State above every other consideration and to fight for it at all times and in all cases.

Until the end of the nineteenth century Austrian administration was in general an authoritarian system; but at the same time, from the commencement of the superficially constitutional era, the view was accepted that the civil service was responsible to Parliament through Ministers. Considerable resistance on the part of the higher bureaucracy had to be overcome when, in 1875, the Liberal Auersperg-Lasser Ministry passed its admirable law establishing legal control over the administration to safeguard the rights of the individual citizen. During the entire reign of Francis Joseph, the Austrian civil service had a high conception of its own position and status, and an almost contemptuous opinion of the value of parliamentary institutions and the sovereign rights of the people as expressed through them. Yet this bureaucracy, with all its admitted faults in its last epoch, from 1861 onward, deserved in many respects to hold the first place among the administrative services of the great European States. It was absolutely incorruptible. The scale of salaries was by no means high; but in the exercise of its functions it was animated by a very lofty sense of social and juridical right. As part of its old Austrian inheritance it possessed a humane outlook, which honorably distinguished it from the bureaucracies of other nations and states. It had the further merit of economy. It did its utmost to spare the resources of the State, which were em-



barrassed by centuries of a bad financial system, by a costly army and foreign policy, and, finally, by the very small contribution made by Hungary and Galicia to the common revenues.

There was, of course, another side to this picture—the picture of the Viennese bureaucrat as unselfish, highly-cultivated, intelligent, and conscientious, a side that came from the historic character of the Austrian state system as a whole. Created as a dynastic instrument, and well aware of the fact that, since it rested on the army, the army alone made possible the continued existence, tranquillity, and future development of a State composed of so many discordant nations, the Austrian bureaucracy was too much inclined to submit, against its own better judgment, to the reactionary tendencies which down to the very last days of the Empire dominated the Court. Its political outlook, which had been liberal in the middle of the century, suffered, mainly as a result of this, from a certain petrification; it became impossible for the bureaucrats to conceive of Austria except as they had done under the Schmerling régime. They considered it to be, in reality, a unitary State, absolutely controlled by officialdom; in their view the trappings of constitutionalism, which they always regarded as a nuisance and hindrance to the sovereign power of the Emperor and to sound administration, were only empty forms. They displayed an extreme skill, an uncommon knowledge of men, and, at times, an unscrupulous use of the means at their disposal for exploiting the personal idiosyncrasies of parties and politicians, in order, alike to maintain this pretense, to keep the machine going, and at the same time guide the legislative activity of Parliament along the lines demanded by the good of the State as conceived of by ministerial and permanent heads of department. In this connection, their part was by no means negligible, especially after the fall of the German Liberals and the installation of the Taaffe régime.

At this time, there was still real creative power in the ranks of the bureaucracy. The great civil servants of the 'eighties and 'nineties, who developed the bureaucratic state-socialist ideas taken over from Germany and worked out the new social reform legislation for the protection of the middle and working classes, were nearly all fairly young men. The ideas which characterize the bureaucracy of the period may be seen incorporated in two outstanding personalities—Dr. Emil Steinbach and Dr. von Koerber, afterward



Prime Minister. Dr. von Koerber was a Liberal; Dr. Steinbach, who prepared the social reform program in association with the officials of the Taaffe period and finally became Finance Minister, was a fervent Catholic and a Conservative. It was he, nevertheless, who put the idea of universal suffrage before Francis Joseph.

The Bureaucracy's attitude toward the antipathy to which they were exposed during the Taaffe "conciliation" régime will have been indicated by the above survey. Much credit is due to the skill, loyalty, and intelligence of the members of the civil service for the way in which they accepted, without any criticism when in the outside world, or any diminution of official efficiency, an administrative policy which in many respects was repugnant to their views and painful to the national sentiments of the Germans among them. In this they displayed their unfailing *esprit de corps* as well as their capacity and readiness to carry out their Sovereign's purpose. Some of the older men, identified with Liberalism and with the centralizing German policy, resigned or retreated to non-political offices. With these exceptions the bureaucracy without a murmur took the path indicated by the will of the Emperor, as embodied in Count Taaffe. There was no collision, no resistance to an initiative coming from Czech, Polish, or Clerical ministers; the habit of silent performance of duty held. At the same time, however, quietly and without any publicity, the higher officials put all their skill and tenacity into withstanding all federal tendencies or any diminution in the power of Vienna. Although they were convinced that the State depended on the maintenance so far as was possible of German as the official language, they in no wise set themselves against the eager efforts of the Taaffe majority to give fuller recognition to the non-German tongues in the functioning of courts and bureaus. What they did was to institute a subtle distinction between the "internal" and the "external" official language. By this means they compelled Czech and Slovene judges and officials to employ only German wherever writing was involved in their decisions and decrees, as well as in all correspondence between courts and government authorities in Crownlands, even where the actual transactions between the parties concerned had been conducted in one of the national tongues, whether by writing or by word of mouth. The bureaucracy, in fact, displayed more than their wonted skill in rounding sharp corners, in throwing temporary bridges of practice over apparently unbridgeable

chasms of principle, and in making use of political parties by granting every kind of concession to their leaders. Above all, they developed, during the Taaffe régime, a complete mastery of their old art of forming and controlling public opinion. This was done almost imperceptibly, their most potent instrument being their influence over the Viennese press, which at this time still had far-reaching power. They possessed, moreover, a pretty shrewd insight into the character of Francis Joseph, being well aware that he would no more permit a coalition of Slav parties with Conservative Federalists to carry through a real transformation of Austria than he had allowed the German Liberals to obtain a lasting grip on power. They foresaw the day when the parliamentary members of the Taaffe Government, detested by the Emperor in proportion as they expressed the political consciousness of the Slavs, would ride for a fall, as the German Liberals had done, in proud assurance that they were the State party *par excellence*. Looking ahead, they saw the day when power would revert to them. The course of events after the fall of the Taaffe Cabinet proved that they were right; and a new epoch then opened. Meanwhile the chapter which closed in 1893 may be summed up in a paragraph. The policy of the so-called Autonomy Coalition in the Reichsrat let loose the strife of nationalities, beginning with the struggle over the language question, and thus introduced explosive elements into a hitherto homogeneous administration and especially into local administration. Although the old discipline of the lower and intermediate grades of the civil service was not shattered, the introduction of large numbers of Slavs undermined its basis more seriously than could be perceived at the time. The extraordinary increase in State activity necessitated an increase in the number of State employees. By the end of the 'nineties, the first results of this were visible, and the old spirit of service was indisputably impaired. The central administrative staff in Vienna, however, emerged from the fifteen years of the Taaffe régime unaltered to all intents and purposes, with its habits of thought and traditions unimpaired. The new non-German elements, relatively few in the higher ranks, had been amalgamated, and so neutralized. Bureaucracy gained as the sterility of Parliament began to be apparent. As the prestige of the Reichsrat and the Diets fell, that of bureaucracy, the silent, faithful, and efficient crew of the Ship of State, rose. Opinion in Austria was affected by a process similar to

that which was so marked in Prussia, where the noble and upper middle classes became more and more reactionary and anti-Liberal after the end of the 'eighties, and where considerable sections even of the middle classes accepted the "strong hand" and the unlimited monarchical claims of William II. True, the strife of nationalities was shaking the prestige of the State and confidence in the dualist constitution, hingeing, as it did, on the ascendancy of the Magyars in Hungary and of the Germans in Austria. Nevertheless, the mechanism of the dynasty, the central Viennese government and administration, had not merely maintained but had even strengthened and extended its power. New tasks had been accomplished in a fashion that enhanced its prestige. Any observer surveying the battle of parties raging without intermission or relief between 1878 and the beginning of the 'nineties must have seen in the bureaucracy the bulwark of continued existence for Austria.

#### *7. Universal Suffrage.*

Two forces brought about the fall of the Taaffe Government in 1893. First, the German-Czech compromise broke down under the advance of national Radicalism among the Czechs. Second, a parliamentary majority rejected Count Taaffe's proposal for franchise reform. His bill granted universal suffrage in urban districts only. The idea of its promoters was to exploit the social radicalism that had grown up so rapidly since the end of the 'eighties, and thus provide a counterpoise to nationalism and middle-class liberalism. It was not till 1907, however, that Baron Beck's Government, after protracted struggles, succeeded in getting universal suffrage, with the Emperor's backing, through the old "Privilege Parliament."<sup>2</sup> From 1893 to 1907 the view gained ground that the only way of turning and tempering the sharp edge of the strife of nationalities was to broaden the franchise, and so democratize the Schmerling Constitution; for under it only landowners and the upper- and middle-class bourgeoisie could vote.

National conflict was further embittered by the Badeni Ministry. Badeni, a Polish bureaucrat of noble birth, and very superficially acquainted with conditions in western Austria, suddenly altered the Language Ordinances, which after almost sixteen years had won

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the system of special franchise privileges under which more than a hundred of its members were elected.



the practical assent of both Germans and Czechs. His object was to enlist Czech support for his Government, and with that aim he issued a new set of decrees, designed simply and solely to favor the Slav elements in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. In the Reichsrat this was violently opposed by the Germans, who for the first time took wholeheartedly to obstruction. For a decade, "necessities of State," including both the Decennial renewal of the alterable part of the Hungarian Compromise of 1867, and the need of providing for the army, had to be met by the use of the "dictatorship paragraph"—(Paragraph 14)—inserted in the Constitution under Schmerling. Three years after Badeni's experiment, the Emperor withdrew his fatal decrees and called together a new ministry manned exclusively by officials, whereupon Czech obstruction automatically took the place of German.

One result of these violent national struggles was a visible decline in the prestige of Parliament, both in its national and in its provincial forms, which revealed to the world that the one effective ruling force in Austria was the bureaucracy. To secure working parliamentary majorities was impossible since obstruction invariably broke out, now on one side, now on the other. Any attempt at majority government being ruled out, responsibility and power reverted to those who had possessed them before constitutionalism was introduced—to the high officials in Vienna. All general questions of policy, legislation, and administration were again in their hands. From then to the day of his death Francis Joseph never wavered in the conviction that the bureaucracy was the only adequate vehicle of power and government. He made, however, one single concession: for the time being, a Czech national representative in the person of an official or university professor was appointed side by side with the Galician Minister as a Chief of Department or Minister without Portfolio, and, as such, was made a member of the Cabinet.

The five years' administration of Dr. von Koerber—one of the last Prime Ministers with real gifts of statesmanship—showed the ruling powers of the Austrian bureaucracy at their very best. But the exclusive ascendancy acquired by them in these final decades had serious drawbacks and dangerous internal consequences. Sole bearers of the entire burden of government, political, administrative, and legislative, they had publicly and with full responsibility assumed a task the difficulties of which were bound to break them.



Inevitably they must be blamed for the bitter disappointments that were in store. Dr. von Koerber, a man of exceptional personal power and adroitness, knew well enough that government by officials on a basis of practical absolutism could not be conducted successfully for any length of time under modern conditions in a great State like Austria. There, nine nations were in a state of perpetual conflict, and both nationally and as individual citizens, in revolt against two hundred and fifty years of subordination to a rigidly centralized administration under a monarch whose spiritual and moral overlordship belonged to a wholly different age. In the national and local parliaments, in the press, in meetings and assemblies, the struggle raged without intermission around a single issue, divided and subdivided into countless trivialities—the question of the language which the central power should use to govern them. Seventeen Provinces were constitutionally recognized as “historic entities.” In each of them, national assemblies, established upon a definite class principle, and one that favored property and the great landowners, controlled an ever growing field of public administration, of culture, finance, and economics. They did it, too, in practically complete independence of imperial administration and government, and were, in this respect, fully comparable with Swiss cantons or members of a federal State. There were thousands of urban and rural communes, as well as many old and famous towns, with Vienna and Prague at their head, that conducted their affairs on a basis of party politics unimpeded by any legal right or power of political interference on the part of the Central Government. That government was alternately fought with political fury and courted with equal, if with a different sort of zeal.

All these quarreling peoples enjoyed the advantage of belonging to one large economic whole, created by the unitary State which gave free trade to all inhabitants of the Empire. Including Hungary, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, it boasted a population of more than fifty millions. Since the 'eighties it had witnessed a mighty industrial, technical, and commercial development. Nevertheless, Magyar nationalism was forever gnawing at the bond which united Hungary to Austria, though that bond was a condition of its own life; and its attitude embittered not only the Slav-German-Rumanian majority within its boundaries, but their millions of brothers in Austria. In this growing instability, and in this struggle

of peoples and territories against the State, no government could stand except by the full use of the legislative and executive power it possessed. A government composed of expert officials, who conducted their own departments conscientiously, and for the most part efficiently, was an admirable administrative body; but the very nature of its composition made it ill adapted for that creative action which resolves and controls complex social and national forces. Moreover, its official ministers were, for the most part, Germans and (when they came from the old bureaucratic families) Viennese. Conditions in the Provinces, with their large measure of political independence, were often entirely unknown to them, while the psychology of the masses, and even of the non-German educated classes and of the press, was to them a sealed book.

For Austrian government and administration this had important consequences. The collapse of parliamentarism cast all sort of political tasks upon the administration. The officials who composed it tended, by a kind of instinct inevitable to men brought up in a strong tradition of highly centralized and realistic leadership, to concentrate all power upon one of their number, the Prime Minister. He had been called to this post by the monarch because, for the time being at any rate, he seemed to be marked out from among his fellow officials by the possession of some of the gifts of the statesman or the political leader. He thus acquired an enhanced influence over the business of all the Ministries and their subordinate authorities; and during the five years of Dr. von Koerber's Government his power was practically unlimited. This change was reflected in the evolution of the originally unpretentious secretarial bureau of the Prime Minister into a "praesidium," an office of stately dimensions, which, by a process of continuous intervention in the more important concerns of every department, finally developed into a sort of super-Ministry, while the office of Prime Minister became a bureaucratic dictatorship. The other Ministers began, in consequence, to seem to be mere secretaries of state in a Chancellery.

Though summoned regularly from time to time, Parliament exercised no real functions for years. Nevertheless, the several parties continued to exercise influence; their clubs passed resolutions; their leaders made speeches; individual deputies exerted pressure on the conduct of local and national business from a national, local, or other party point of view. Thus there arose a peculiar sort of

pseudo-parliamentarism which went on, as it were, underground, conducted in the silence of ministerial rooms, through the exchange of documents between Vienna and the local authorities, with the active and successful participation of party groups, associations, and individual deputies. This anomalous state of affairs was the price the governing bureaucracy had to pay for the fact that the contending nationalities remained more or less quiet even though parliamentary obstruction had completely suspended and excluded from the life of the State any constitutional expression of the popular will. The State machine driven by the bureaucrats, ran practically unimpeded; economic progress was unimpaired; the dynastic principle, and the person of the Emperor, who had won veneration in his old age, were held high above the dust of controversy; and, finally, the primary obligations entailed by the economic and military commitments of the Dual Monarchy were met, almost without incident, by the Ministers, sometimes in accordance with the Emperor's wishes, but more often with those of the Magyars.

The concentration of political activity in the hands of the Prime Minister and his office in no sense implied that the operation of the Departments was thereby lifted above party. On the contrary, the political interests of the government, as realized by him in the several national and political parties, made themselves felt persistently and with increasing effect throughout the entire range and the complex workings of the administrative machine. Before long all grades of the civil service thoroughly understood that the Administration, though keeping well within the letter of the law, regarded itself as entirely free to employ, with due regard to the highest common interest, all the means of the State to help it in its task of meeting the troubles, claims, and political desires pressed upon it by the various races, parliamentary parties, and party leaders. The resources controlled by the Ministers in charge of the various great State departments were certainly extensive enough. Austrian laws gave them immense authority and an arbitrary control over the whole field of economic life, over the police, the public welfare, and the protection of individual interests. The paralyzing of the functions of parliamentary bodies by obstruction and the consequent lack of budgetary control, gave to the Government wide financial powers. Every government had also at its disposal, concessions, permits, privileges, and licenses of all sorts, with all the advantages contingent upon them. More-



over, the Government employed an army of thousands of public officials, civil servants, and workmen; had the appointment, every year, of thousands of people, and could create new offices, and extend existing ones. Thus, as executive heads of the whole administration of the country, uncontrolled by Parliament, Ministers had countless facilities for exercising a powerful and, for the most part covert influence over parties and deputies. They could win over party leaders, and affect party tactics, even when Parliament was not in session. They had the power, therefore, to pursue whatever policy seemed good to them, and could count on accomplishing at least their most urgent purposes and constitutional needs, such as the election of Delegations and the voting of recruits for the army.

Since this sort of political chess-playing implied the abandonment of any idea of fundamental change in the existing order, or in the actual disposition of power in the State, all political parties were in their turn incapacitated for any creative activity. The political aim of the bureaucracy, in fact, from this time on was simply to achieve a more or less quiet toleration of its own rule by getting at the electors through their respective parties. It was perfectly satisfied so long as it could keep the Empire's various races tranquil, and could manipulate obstructive parties in such wise that they would oppose no effective hindrance to the election of reliable Delegations. On this last point Francis Joseph was personally adamant. The treaty obligations entered into with Hungary made any failure in this regard impossible to contemplate. German obstruction in the Reichsrat from 1897, and Czech obstruction there from about 1900, gave rise to a ministerial absolutism, that was well-intentioned, enlightened, and by no means simply reactionary. Its technical and legal basis was to be found in the famous "dictatorship paragraph," incorporated by Schmerling in the Constitution of 1861, and preserved in Paragraph 14 of that of 1867. In declamatory denunciation of the decrees, issued in place of laws, based upon this paragraph, both German and Slav parties were prolific in futile sessions of the House; but since it occurred to no party to remove the paragraph, all of them in effect assisted in giving something like a moral basis to the dictatorial system, and so helped to consolidate the monopoly of power in the hands of officialdom. Bureaucracy, indeed, came at last to be viewed by the public at large as the sole repository of every real idea of, and feeling for the State, the one body standing for the



maintenance of the Empire and the protection of its laws, the only one which had any care for the welfare of the community as an organic whole. Here again, however, parties and deputies were content, so long as they could, on the one hand, satisfy the growing radicalism of their electors by a show of opposition to the Government, and, on the other, remain in its good graces and exploit it, for the advantage of their party and constituents, in the manner already described. As long as they could get government assistance to meet the local and particular needs of their constituencies, they kept their seats. That was enough for them. Thus, although parliamentary institutions had ceased to function with any sort of regularity, the population was able, through its members, to obtain pretty well all it wanted from the Government. Above all, financial assistance was secured, without much difficulty, for the construction of railways, roads, schools, and municipal buildings. Moreover, new offices were always being created, and members got as many places as possible for their constituents.

There were parliamentarians who saw from the beginning the deep and lasting injury that the increasing influence of deputies over the nomination, placing, and pensioning of civil servants was causing to the high tradition of the earlier bureaucracy, and how seriously it was bound to compromise both the maintenance of a disinterested and incorruptible administration and a proper economy in the use of public money. Parties and party leaders, however, were not going to give up the sweets of power for reasons such as these. From the middle 'nineties on, every disinterested observer knew that the good old tradition, however solid it might still appear from the outside, was bound to be weakened and undermined by the actual circumstances of government. No one knew this better than the leading men on the inside, almost all of them German officials. The Slav element, gradually pushing its way into the higher ranks, cared little for any such injury to administration. To most of them, the State idea, as conceived by Germans, remained fundamentally alien; some, though absolutely correct in their personal behavior, were positively hostile to it. Indeed, they viewed such "national" gains as were achieved by force or guile, through the exercise of parliamentary influences on the Government, as justifying, or even as constituting, the proper object of the political activity of their countrymen. In 1896, the portfolio of Finance in Count Franz

Thun's Government was assigned to Professor Joseph Kaizl, a most able man, a member of Parliament, and the leader of the Young Czechs. German obstruction broke out with redoubled force. The Czechs seized the opportunity offered by their countryman's position in the most important office in the Ministry, an office carrying with it the appointment of some thousands of officials, to secure a more solid footing in the civil service, as well as the usual increase in its personnel. No post, however small, was beneath the attention of the Czech nationalist in politics; Kaizl's *Memoirs*, published after his death, show the length to which this sort of nationalization tactics was already being carried. Nationality began to express itself objectively over the entire range of life, from the filling of a vacant cathedral benefice in Prague or Olmütz, to the locating of a new railway station, the erection of a technical school, or the promotion of a provincial to some post or other in Vienna. In the 'nineties, in fact, a process began, which more and more quickly was to transform the administration into a battleground on which the nationalist parties in silence, but with grim determination and at a hundred points simultaneously, contended for place and influence.

German opposition, like every national policy in old Austria, showed itself only in part on the public stage of the Reichsrat, the Provincial Diets, and the Assemblies. The Germans, too, were obviously losing sight of the Austrian conception of the State; they were taking more and more to the method of carrying on the racial struggle within the administration; and, with the silent support of the younger German officials, they exploited their parliamentary influence to secure their national claims, *i.e.*, the local demands of their constituents, and to gain places in the administrative body. This tendency naturally appeared earlier, and was more strongly marked, among the officials in the mixed-language areas than in Vienna or the German Alps.

About this time, another political force came into play, to contribute its quota to the disintegration of the bureaucracy and, with it, of the whole Habsburg system. This was the great Christian Socialist movement led by Dr. Lueger. Gradually it swept over Vienna and the whole Alpine region, fusing into a single political unit old Clericals, anti-Semites (inspired with new life by German Nationalism), lower-middle class opponents of capitalism and the growing class of subordinate officials whose chronic underpayment

inclined them to syndicalist ideas. The political slogan of the party was the maximum extension of territorial and communal autonomy. Voicing as it did the demands of the lower-middle class both in town and country, and of a great number of ill-paid junior officials, it was a movement of a demagogic type. As such, it was animated by a strong antipathy to what was, at that time, constantly being described as the coalition of the ruling bureaucracy with Viennese high finance and Big Business.

That the leader of the party contrived to combine such a point of view with High Toryism was one indication of the sort of person he was. His ability was circumscribed neither by scruples nor by theories; and the rapid rise of Dr. Lueger, and his speedy political conquest of German Austria, had momentous results. Basing itself, notably in Vienna, on the commune unit, the movement pushed to its logical extreme the peculiar freedom of the commune in the Austrian local governing system, as developed since 1849. While mayor of Vienna, Dr. Lueger, with the enthusiastic support of the great mass of the middle classes and of a section of the working classes, pursued a broad policy of municipalization with a success which made Vienna a sort of municipal republic within the State. Numerous other municipalities, large and small, followed the example of the capital. To attain its ends, however, the party had to win majorities in the Diets, and to consolidate its political position in the Central Parliament. Then legal and administrative control, the first vested in the State, that is in the provincial bureaucracy, and the latter in the Diet and its executive committee, the *Landesausschuss*, would pass into the hands of the party, which already dominated Vienna and was soon to dominate all the rural communes and many urban areas in the Alpine Provinces. Imperial endorsement of Dr. Lueger's election as Mayor was at first refused by Court and Government, because they did not like the man; but soon they were forced to grant it. The incident shows the growing impression which this new popular movement, with autonomy and the power of the middle class as its basis, and Catholic and Conservative opinion as its support, was making on the bureaucratic bulwarks of the authoritarian State. In Bohemia and Moravia, the autonomy of the Province and of the communes had proved the most powerful instrument for the emancipation of the Slavs from German centralization; along similar lines, the political maturity of the mass of



the middle classes in Vienna found expression, and attracted to itself by so doing considerable sections of the upper classes and of the nationalist intelligentsia. In Bohemia, as in German Austria, the victory of these parties diminished the political prestige of State government and administration and caused a prodigious growth of self-government resting exclusively on free elections. Christian-Socialist majorities in the diets of Vienna, Linz, Salzburg, and Innsbruck, were busily occupied in extending the scope and range of domestic administrations which were wholly free from any central control, and gave employment to an ever increasing army of officials. These officials, like the municipal officials of Vienna, formed independent and sometimes important associations, comprising men of university education, and high legal or technical training. Their spirit was, of course, from the start, partisan. They were there for life, in the service of a triumphant political majority, and threw themselves with zeal into the task—vital for the retention of that majority—of using autonomous institutions to foster the interest of the electors.

At the same time, apart from the rôle played by direct party interest in the nomination and extension of personnel, and in favoring the economic interests of influential sections belonging to the party, the self-governing administration in province and commune was law-abiding and honorable, if hardly non-partisan. It had a certain advantage over the State administration, inasmuch as it took, at least to the sections of the population represented by the majority party in the diets and local assemblies, the guise of a "people's administration." Thanks to the support it enjoyed in diets and communal councils, it could show far more initiative than had been possible, for a long while back, in the case of the imperial authorities. Thus aided and guided, the Christian-Socialist party leaders in control locally did much practical work, which was regarded as an achievement of the people themselves. Hospitals, roads, street and other light railways, schools of all sorts, and welfare institutions of the most varying kinds, were provided. Activities of a purely social character to meet economic or cultural needs were also undertaken, for example, money grants to associations and clubs, and even grants to such private undertakings as seemed important to the party, either on the ground of public interest or because of the character of their promoters. Moreover, the local officials, belonging



as they did to a modern service, were able to set up a less bureaucratic system than was generally possible in Austria. The effect of all this was to put the old imperial administration in an unfavorable light, and to compel it to appear more and more as a police force. Its positive services seemed by no means to justify its privileged social status; popularity can hardly pertain to the body which personifies public authority. Thus, even in the old Conservative German hereditary lands party activity, operating on the solid footing of a powerful autonomy, began to make its presence painfully sensible to the State administration. The pressure brought to bear on the Ministries by party leaders was paralleled by deputies in the chambers of the Governor or the President of the Diet, or the district administrator. Everywhere deputies came forward, with complete self-confidence, not only on behalf of their constituencies, but of individual constituents, to demand and exercise an unwillingly granted but quite definite influence on the State administration.

Turn back now to the center of government. We have already seen how, since the 'nineties, government policy had begun to revolve around the Prime Minister and his office. This very fact caused an extraordinary concentration of administrative policy at the top. The bureaucratic Prime Minister could get his bills passed only, first, by concessions and favors granted to one or the other of the parties squabbling in Parliament and in turn holding up Parliament by obstruction, or, second, by concessions to this or that constituency represented by some powerful individual deputy. Therefore, whether he liked it or not, he had to intervene constantly in the impartial handling of administrative matters in the separate Ministries. This system, developed and practiced by Dr. von Koerber, was imitated by his bureaucratic successors in office. It was obviously impossible for them to carry on single-handed a course of action of such complicated ramifications, with a hundred different turns on any given day. Consequently the chief permanent official in the Prime Minister's office became to all intents and purposes a vice-minister for the transaction of all these political deals, and also for maintaining the most important concern of government, the standing arrangement with Hungary. The anomalous intermediate position necessarily acquired by the holder of this office was a very notable "*παρέκβασις*" (*parekbasis*) in the old bureaucratic system, which had rested exclusively on the authority of the Crown and its own rigid concen-

tration on the business in hand, and not at all on chess-play or "compromises of interest" between the Government and the political parties.

Those who understood the historic nature of the Austrian authoritarian State could not fail to perceive the change in its spirit and being in the last two decades of the Monarchy. One of the juridical and actual pillars of the old constitutional system was the strict limitation of functions. This principle suffered marked and lasting injury as the result of the changes made necessary by the pressure of political confusion, as described above. Without any formal change, a peculiar structure, the Prime Minister's Praesidium, a large group of experts in law and economics, and officials of high rank, had been superimposed on the existing Ministries. It was not the outcome of creative statesmanship; its sole purpose was to influence the national and political parties and sections in Parliament and to satisfy *sub rosa* the ambitions and desires of deputies. It need hardly be said that administration proper suffered by the progressive development of the influences that were thus "parliamentarizing" it.

Through the machinery here described in broad outline, the famous tactics of "sausage-making" as Count Taaffe himself once cynically described his method of government, was carried on during the two decades in which it might still have been possible to effect an organic transformation of Austria, on the basis of equal rights for all its peoples, now grown to political maturity, within the general framework of a dynastic union. But, instead of a clear and comprehensive program of reforms, such as might have attached all races and classes to the support of a great federative idea, the bureaucrats pursued the line of excluding them altogether from the constructive activity of the State. The result was to increase and accelerate the common alienation of the peoples from an authority which all felt to be the purely external, family rule of an hereditary State. This alienation was not in the least diminished by the fact that, merely because the aged monarch needed peace and quiet, the bureaucratic State, with good grace or with bad, doled out crumbs to all the parliamentary parties in turn, in the shape of progressive or social reforms, designed to keep the constituencies in good temper.

A new force, Social Democracy, played upon this very curious system, after the turn of the century, and, notably, after the great

impulse given it by the introduction of universal suffrage in 1907. Dr. Victor Adler, leader and creator of the Party, succeeded by his skilful diplomatic handling of the Viennese bureaucracy in softening or, in some cases, actually removing rough places in the old police régime which had remained throughout the rule of the German Liberals and of Count Taaffe. He, in fact, carried through a sort of education of the bureaucracy, which, just because of the noiselessness of the operation, produced a profound effect on the younger civil servants in Vienna and, to a certain extent also on the local officials. It was possible for this to occur in the last great period of officialdom, from 1896 on, because the higher officials, called upon to direct great affairs and deal with the large social and economic issues which the time pressed upon them, were not men who thought along class lines, or were limited by the arrogance of the aristocratic politician. Further, an unusually large number of the civil servants in the great ministerial offices were young men, who, having behind them a thoroughly scientific education, generally at the University of Vienna, had acquired a wide and more or less democratic outlook on the theoretic and practical aspects of the problems with which they had to deal. There was thus a considerable measure of mutual understanding between many civil servants and the intellectual leaders of the Social Democratic party. This caused the latter to represent, in certain respects, for the mass of the organized workers whom they led, something similar to what the "national officials" who came to Vienna from the non-German Provinces, were to the Slav national parties.<sup>3</sup> Much therefore had altered within both the bureaucracy and the Administration by the time the great experiment in democratization came into effect in 1907. It is significant that, by the time the idea of universal suffrage had taken root in the mind of the aged Emperor, and he had determined to carry it through, its strongest supporters, next to the Social Democrats, were the Czechs and the Christian Socialists. As a matter of fact, the first Reichsrat elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage, caused the bitterest disappointment to

<sup>3</sup> At this time, men like Lujo Brentano, Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk, Carl Menger, and Eugen von Philippovich, were teaching Economics and Public Finance at the University of Vienna. Anton Menger was publishing his "New Theory of the State," Edmund Bernatzik was lecturing on Austrian Constitutional Law, and in Vienna a genuine but short-lived middle-class "Social-Political party" openly came forward in favor of universal suffrage.



the hopes entertained by the Court. Instead of producing racial reconciliation, it helped to complete the process of disintegration of the State. The revival of the language struggle in Bohemia; the introduction of the principle of race in its most intransigent form in every department of political life; the division of Social Democracy itself into nationalist clubs; the continuation of racial strife in its most acute form, waged by new mass parties genuinely democratic in composition, and employing the old obstructionist tactics in new and cruder forms—this was its result. It was a result that naturally led to the re-establishment and consolidation of a system of purely official government. Even the purely decorative national ministers without portfolio, representing Poles, Czechs, and latterly even Germans, were removed when early in 1914, Count Stuerghk prorogued the Reichsrat. He had already dismissed the Bohemian Diet (long practically defunct) and now proceeded to suspend autonomous administration in this first and most important of the Provinces, where he replaced the committee elected from the ranks of deputies by an administrative committee of State officials. Thus, after fifty years the phantom work of the phantom parliamentary system was annihilated, at the very moment when it was being democratized in earnest.

The events of the last few years had revealed more and more clearly how many blows had been dealt at the real supports of the whole system, the central authorities and departments, and how great were the material and spiritual losses sustained by the dynastic machine at the hands of those politically responsible for it. For any detached observer, signs abounded of the extent to which the system was diseased. Thus, precisely at the moment when State activity was increasing in every direction, the central spring of the machine was being impaired by the decline in the State principle, and by a simultaneous deterioration in the mental outlook of the civil service. For many generations it had worked for the common good with a pure devotion quite untainted by political prepossessions; now, it was infected, through and through, by the spirit of national strife. At the same time that part of the bureaucracy which was of high magisterial rank was losing authority. As the result of the nationalization of the railways, the extension of the postal service on modern lines and the addition of many other new and technical branches, a kind of great subsidiary civil service had grown up, an



annex, too, that inevitably was without the traditions of the older official body. Finally, the beginning of the new century witnessed a gradual revolt of the service itself against its conditions of pay and the rigid, hierarchical grading of the lower ranks under the official bureaucracy. This was aggravated, in its turn, by the rise within the lower civil service ranks of a trade-union spirit, more or less tinged with Socialism. Here were signs and portents enough to convince any unprejudiced mind that the process of constitutional, political, and national disintegration going on in Austria, in the last decade of the reign of Francis Joseph, was not confined to the sham constitution drawn up in 1861, but had affected the solid foundations of dynastic power, officialdom, and that administrative mechanism which the German bureaucracy had so carefully tended and built up. The failure of the attempt made in 1911 to lay bare the process of the trouble, through an Imperial Commission of Inquiry on the lines of a British Royal Commission, and, thus equipped with knowledge, to proceed to a thoroughgoing reform of the system, was due not only to the contrary tide of national antagonisms, but to the silent opposition of the bureaucracy itself. Its objection to any serious reconstruction sprang mainly from a conviction that Austria could exist only on the terms on which it had grown into a modern State, *i.e.*, in the hands of a mighty *German* bureaucracy; any alteration in that must be injurious.

On the outbreak of war in 1914, the Commission disbanded, since it rightly held that the existence of Habsburg rule, with that of the Austrian State, was involved in the issue of the War. The imperial and royal administration therefore entered on its last phase. It had endured through two generations of peace—broken only by the brief Prussian War of 1866—in the form and in the spirit laid down for it between 1850 and 1855. Now the last test was upon it. During the World War, government and administration were exclusively in its hands.

## CHAPTER II

### EMERGENCY LEGISLATION IN AUSTRIA

IN Austria, as in every other Continental State, the constitution made provision of a general kind for an extraordinary extension of the executive power of Government in the event of war. Here, as in the other great European States, it was held that the "right of war" gave to the territorial chief, or war lord, extensive supremacy over his subjects, a supremacy to be exercised through various civil and military mediums, in response to military needs. The introduction of a written constitution, endowing the citizen with certain definite rights, as opposed to the State, necessitated provision for the suspension of such rights as limited the freedom of the executive in the case of war or of civil disturbance in any part of the realm. The legislation adopted for this purpose in the German states and in Austria, after the introduction of constitutionalism, was, in all essentials, based on principles first laid down in France in 1791. The condition thereby established was known as that of *état de siège*; for the general effect was to extend to the entire realm, or to portions thereof, the rules and regulations worked out by military science for a beleaguered area. In Germany French terminology was retained, the Prussian Law of 1851, for example, speaks of rights given by a "state of siege"; whereas the Austrian Law of May 5, 1869, uses the expression "suspension of the fundamental rights" and "state of emergency." Under this law the Government and its officers acquired far-reaching dictatorial powers. The line taken was that of suspending for the duration of the war those provisions of public law which guaranteed to the citizen a certain measure of personal freedom. Clause 1 thus gives power to suspend, in whole or in part, Articles 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13 of the Fundamental State Laws covering the rights of citizens in general, and to issue special decrees, for the use of the police, in place of Articles 8 and 9. Such exceptional regulations are to be issued, unless otherwise specified in the "Emergency Law," only upon a decision of the Ministry countersigned by the Emperor. The suspended articles cover legal provisions governing arrest and the institution of criminal proceedings, the right of the authorities to deport a citizen from his place

of abode or to detain him there, the inviolability of his house and the privacy of his letters, the right of assembly, and the freedom of the press. A second law, the Law of May 23, 1873, extended the dictatorial powers of the executive by dispensing with the constitutional system of trial by jury in newspaper and political cases, for a year at most, if in any given area proof were forthcoming that this was "necessary to secure free and impartial justice." The life of this suspension of jury trial could not be extended or renewed until the next session of the Reichsrat, and could be decreed only by its acquiescence. In addition to this, a special ordinance made civilians subject to military courts in case of offenses connected with mobilization, the safety of the army, and of military operations. The new Military Penal Code extended the competence of military courts and penalties to everyone connected with the army, *i.e.*, to administrative officers, and to all kinds of salaried civilians attached to the service.

The steady growth in armaments and war preparations that was going on throughout Europe at the turn of the century everywhere caused an extension of the regulations designed to secure the fullest exploitation of the people for military purposes. Here all provisions of this sort followed the German model and were grouped together under the head of "War Service," at the time when political events in the Balkans compelled the Government to coördinate and strengthen its preparations. After a very stormy passage through the Reichsrat, a special War Service Act was put on the statute book and became law at the beginning of 1913. It gave the Government extensive special authority, enabling it from the moment of a declaration of war to apply the entire resources of the population to the business of meeting the requirements of the army in manufactured goods and the products of agriculture, to assist in making preparations for fortifications of all sorts, in the safeguarding of transport, and the economic supply and equipment of the troops in the field. The most important provisions of the War Service Law were the following:

1. In case of mobilization, and of the establishment of a state of war, the provisions of this Act come into force for the period during which war is threatened or is going on, and apply to the service of the mobilized, equipped or entrained portion of the armed forces, as also to all measures necessary for successfully carrying on the

war, in so far as these needs cannot be met in the normal way, *i.e.*, by the methods used ordinarily in times of peace, with sufficient speed or at reasonable cost.

2. Requisition for war service is to be limited to what is absolutely necessary. Obligation is, in all cases, limited by the capacity of the individual. Unless expressly provided in the law, war service contributions are to be compensated adequately.

The most important result of this principle was the industrial conscription of all men not capable of bearing arms and not yet over fifty. Certain categories were excepted, for example, persons bodily or mentally unfit, public officials, clergymen, and farmers, proprietors of businesses, etc., who had no assistants. Complementary to the obligation of service was the obligation to hand over to the State, goods, etc., useful to the army. Draught animals, wagons, ships, airships, automobiles, carrier pigeons, land, buildings of all sorts, dwellings, stores and factories, industrial establishments and manufacturing installations, especially of machinery, private railways, telegraph and telephone exchanges and lines, could be requisitioned for war service. Persons called up for service of any kind were subject to military tribunals, in the event of failure to meet their obligations. This included railway workers, sailors, and civilians on any kind of work covered by the War Service Act. Similarly, communes had to put their hospitals at the disposal of the army authorities, and to maintain them; owners of animals for slaughter, or of commissariat supplies of any kind, had to hand over such supplies, at cost, to the army authorities; or, in general, all such supplies could be requisitioned as materials of war.

The organization of this practically unlimited war service was, in principle, in the hands of the Minister of National Defense; in urgent cases, however, military commandants acted directly with the political authorities and communes. In case of any refusal to render service, the whole compulsory machinery of the law came into force. In effect, the rights of the private citizen in relation to goods, necessities, and services demanded by the military authorities, were gone; private property depended entirely on their good pleasure, although, legally, payment could be secured and collected through the special commissions, mainly composed of officials, which were set up *ad hoc*.

This Act, pushed through the Reichsrat, in the teeth of most



bitter opposition, was calculated to effect a complete militarization of civil life, personal freedom, and property. It was the first trumpet blast, announcing the approaching war era. The Hungarian Reichstag adopted it, word for word; identical ordinances were issued for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Monarchy would thus seem to have been flawlessly equipped for war from the economic point of view. Ever since the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina heralded danger, military preparations had been going on with increasing speed. Frontier work in the difficult period after the annexation and the events following the creation of the Balkan League showed up very clearly defects in the army and in military preparedness generally. Since 1908, therefore, a comprehensive overhauling had been going on. By way of concession to public opinion, an act which reformed the antiquated Court Martial Procedure, as promised for years, was passed, along with the War Service Law; but no reform was effected in the case of the equally antiquated Military Code. Parliament, both in Vienna and Budapest did however pass new and considerably improved laws for the maintenance of families of men and officers called up in reserve or in the militia. So far as the size of the army went, the increase was trifling, if compared with that of the armies of France, Russia, or Germany. The new Army Service Act, substituting two for three years with the colors, constituted a real improvement; it was to come into effect in the autumn of 1914.

Further, there was a complete overhauling of the machinery of mobilization and transition to a state of war—the most difficult administrative task when preparing for modern war. The work of mobilization operations, as it was called, had always been one of the most important and secret tasks of district and provincial administrators and of the army command itself. Both the Government and Ministry of War were well aware that anything like a complete mobilization of the forces of the Dual Monarchy—an emergency which had not presented itself since the introduction of universal compulsory military service in 1868—demanded greatly improved arrangements. Experiences of partial mobilization in 1908 and 1912 provided the strongest argument for reform. Discussions accordingly took place between the Minister of War, the head of the General Staff, and the Government. Held in the strictest privacy, in 1912, their decisions were incorporated in a secret Memorandum,

and produced important results. Prominent military experts and high officials in the civil service alike had long recognized that past experience could throw little light on the problems presented to the Government and the General Staff by the mobilization of a nationwide army for modern war. For this, even the wide powers of the 1869 Emergency Act were inadequate. To ensure a swift and smooth mobilization by the coöperation of the local authorities with the army command was not enough; the real danger was that mobilization might be disturbed by internal and political factors. The latest European wars—those of 1912 and 1913 in the Balkans—had, for the first time, wholly revealed the dangers to plans for military operation involved in modern means of intercourse and communication. Espionage on the part of the enemy had, of course, always been a matter of serious concern, but now espionage and the measures to be taken to meet it had been made a problem of the first magnitude by modern technical inventions, and the vast network of telegraphs and telephones, to say nothing of wireless installations. Danger also lurked in the modern newspaper, in view both of the necessary secrecy of strategic operations, and of the entire mechanism on which the striking power of the large armies of modern times depends. In Austria, anxiety was here aggravated by deadly suspicions born of the internal situation.

It had long been assumed by many foreign observers that the bitter national antagonisms between Magyars and Germans, and practically all the other peoples of the Empire would endanger anything like a swift or satisfactory mobilization; that Slav and Rumanian reservists and militia would desert *en masse* when called up. Fears—and hopes—often went a good deal further. In some quarters it was believed that the political events of recent years and the latent hostility of Austro-Hungarian policies to those of Russia, Serbia, and Italy, must thoroughly have unsettled the borderlands in East Galicia, where Muscovite and Orthodox agitation had been going on for decades, and in Croatia, where deep unrest had been bred by the Magyar Nationalism of the Hungarian Government, and made still deeper, in the border regions, by Greater Serbian propaganda. Internal difficulties were likewise anticipated in governing circles from quite another quarter, connected with opposition to war as such. Many military men thought that in the capitals and great industrial areas there was danger of the sabotaging of war

preparations by Social Democrats and Communists, against whom precautions ought to be taken. It was an accepted commonplace in military and governing circles in Austria and in Hungary that mobilization against the enemies whom it was likely they would have to face at once—namely, Russia, Serbia, and Italy—could only be carried through by a variety of precautionary measures and by the full employment of all the available emergency powers. This conviction led to the conferences between the military and civil authorities, mentioned above.

A state of war implies the putting of a certain degree of dictatorial power into the hands of the civil government. There is nothing specially modern in that. Its distinguishing modern mark in our times lies in the sharp contrast between this dictatorship and the normal conditions of peace, a contrast contemporary with the introduction of the constitutional principle and the personal liberty of the individual as constant factors in the regulation of everyday life, even in such conservative monarchies as Germany and Austria-Hungary. At the same time the military dictatorship, provided for in the event of a war between modern European States, had, in conformity with the high development of modern social and economic existence, to be prepared and even, as it were, mechanized beforehand, unless it was to produce grave drawbacks instead of advantages. In other words, a complete machine of dictatorship had to be worked out in detail so that when put in operation it would work with order. For that, a suspension of the rights of the citizen, at least for the period of mobilization, was indispensable. Some such preparations were made in all the belligerent states on the continent, and, later, even in England and America—in England under the Defense of the Realm Act. In Austria, the work of preparation was carried through in the most thorough manner and, what is more important, was from the first conceived of as part of the special defensive machinery of the Empire and its dynastic head. What was remarkable and calamitous in the Austrian system was that the dictatorship principle was, from the first, carried far beyond the technical problems of mobilization, and from the outset was viewed not only by the military but by the responsible civil authorities, *i.e.*, by bureaucracy, as a political measure. This cannot be considered a fault or as moral obliquity on their part, but rather as a tragic and historical result of the internal politics of the Empire. All



peoples and classes shared the view that a European war, if and when it threatened to break out, would be a life and death struggle for the Habsburg Monarchy. Responsible statesmen and generals were aware of this and adjusted their conduct accordingly. If there be any question here of guilt, the charge must lie against every Austrian government since 1848, for each contributed to the political development of events. The fundamental causes of the continually increasing alienation from the Empire, and what it stood for, by all its peoples other than the Germans and the Magyars, were the maintenance of the old Austrian system of a definitely German, bureaucratic centralization, and the steadily increasing pressure of Magyar power, power given by the 1867 Compromise, upon the other peoples dwelling in Hungary, *i.e.*, the races contemptuously referred to as "the nationalities." In the last two decades, Francis Joseph had tended to lean more and more on Magyar nationalism and German centralism as the two pillars of dynastic policy. This made it incumbent on civil and military advisers, who knew the effects of this on the Slav and Latin peoples, to prepare a régime of absolute military and police controls in case of the outbreak of war, in order to safeguard the mobilized army from dangers in the rear arising from the unfriendly and often actually hostile temper generated by the policies of the last sixty years among non-Germans and non-Magyars. The implications of this were momentous. It meant, above all, that it was the determined purpose of leading statesmen to wage war from the beginning with all available resources as a means of maintaining that political position which the two States of the Dual Monarchy had held through the last decade before its outbreak. This meant that an out-and-out "No" was given in advance to any hope of peaceful transformation of the internal system, to any reconstruction designed to fit it, in a juster and happier fashion, to the fundamental complexity of its component peoples, and to any alteration in the Dualism that had, since 1867 so far as Hungary was concerned, been perverted into Magyar Imperialism. No leading statesman, in Vienna or Budapest, either before the War or at its outbreak, seems to have attempted any estimate of what the repercussion of war preparations, carried through with this aim in view, was bound to be in the then state of opinion on the leaders of parties in countries passionately opposed to, and suffering under German and Magyar centralism. For ob-



viously by assuming in advance that a war (in which by definition the very existence of the monarchy was at stake) was, at the same time, to be an instrument of unlimited internal reaction and repression of Slav and Romanic aspirations for equality with the dominant races of the Empire, they thereby made it inevitable that, if the War were protracted, it must, for the minority nations thus condemned to hopelessness, become a war of despair.

We may now turn to that document, the "Orientation Memorandum" of 1912, which gave war preparations this definitely political character. In the words of the introduction, its purpose was to "orientate all military and territorial commandants of fortresses, local authorities, financial authorities, post and telegraph officials, and the local gendarmerie of the Kingdoms and lands represented in the Reichsrat, as to the exceptional regulations to be issued for the State as a whole in the event of war or when a state of war emergency was immediately imminent. As for the duties of the said commandants and authorities in the preparation and execution of the said regulations, these exceptional regulations had for their object not only the secrecy and security of all military measures that might have to be taken to prevent disclosure, disturbance, or unauthorized publication within the country; they were further to assist in carrying through all measures taken by the armed forces, and to put at their disposal all the resources available for their aid in the country."

For this purpose, then, the "Orientation Memorandum" as this agreement between the Ministry of War, the General Staff, and the Government, came to be called, demanded nothing less than the creating of a new central authority, unknown to the constitution, in the shape of a War Surveillance Office. This was a supervisory and guiding body, and was attached to the War Ministry to carry out exceptional regulations. The duty of the War Surveillance Office was to follow up all matters possibly open to suspicion, to test all reports, in such a way as to prevent any disclosure, disturbance, or unauthorized publication of military or other measures taken in connection with the War. At its head was a general of high rank, nominated by the Minister of War, in consultation with the Chief of the General Staff. Under him was a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, and two captains, with two officials of the Foreign Office, two each from the common Ministries of Finance, the Interior and Trade; and one

each to represent the Ministries of Justice, Finance, Railways, and National Defense. The officials from the Imperial and Royal Ministries assigned to the War Surveillance Office possessed all the powers of its officers, and their position was the same as if they were actually in military service.

The second part of the "Orientation Memorandum" contained "Provisions for carrying out Emergency Decrees," arranged in groups, which included the transference of the Political Administration to the Supreme Command; Temporary Nullification of Articles 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13 of the Fundamental Law; Police Regulations for Passports and Registration; Possession of Weapons, Munitions, and Explosives; Suspension of Trial by Jury, and Extension of Court Martial; Temporary Subordination of Civilians to Military Law; Composition and Functions of Military Tribunals and the Establishing of Military Organizations; Measures to be taken in the Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Services in the event of War; Limitation of Railway and Sea Transport; Prohibition of Foreign Newspapers; Control over the Postal Service; Limitation and Surveillance of Telephones and Telegraphs; and, finally, a number of regulations covering export and import embargoes. These various activities of the War Surveillance Office will be dealt with in fuller detail later.

This brief survey of the code of military administration shows clearly enough that the original underlying idea was to equip the army with the fullest powers to protect itself against espionage, etc. The institution of the War Surveillance Office makes it evident that even at the time of the preparation of the "Orientation Memorandum," its authors had passed quite beyond their original purpose, and now held the view that a great war could be carried through only by means of the permanent maintenance of emergency measures, that is to say by the maintenance of a dictatorship in the full sense of the word. Such a dictatorship was, in fact, set up in 1914, and remained in being to the end of the War.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LAST PEACE GOVERNMENT IN AUSTRIA

THE sole business transacted by the first Parliament elected under universal suffrage, which met in June 1907, was to pass the periodical Compromise—the *Ausgleich*—with Hungary, for the renewal of which parliamentary sanction had not been granted since 1897. The “Monarchy under notice to quit” was thus placed on a constitutional basis for another decade, or till 1917. This done, it soon became painfully clear that universal suffrage had powerfully strengthened the two basic forces of modern political life, nationalism and socialism; that nationality had become the one basis for representation in the Chamber, and that the Central Government, composed of officials, was powerless in the face of this situation. The expedient of associating parliamentary Ministers with the Government, adopted by Baron von Beck, the final author of universal suffrage, proved totally inadequate to secure a lasting parliamentary majority. The struggle between Germans and Czechs in Bohemia, temporarily allayed during the franchise debates, blazed out once more all along the line. This, in connection with the grave difficulties arising from the annexation of the occupied areas by Count Aehrenthal, the Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> caused the fall of the Beck Cabinet in the autumn of 1908. Beck’s successor, Baron Bienerth, a man hide-bound by the traditions of the Viennese bureaucracy, and hardly up to the average official level in political intelligence, did his best in the next three years to destroy whatever hopes of democratic representation were entertained by the mass of the people, and, at the outset, by the Court. The art of government, as practised by Vienna from this time on, was reduced to presenting a blank face of passive indifference to the parliamentary obstruction of Czechs, South

<sup>1</sup> There are many signs indicating that the Finance Minister and administrator of the occupied areas, Baron Burián, a Hungarian, gave the first incitement to the fatal policy of Aehrenthal. The intention was to take an important step in the direction of realizing the plan, formed in ruling circles in Budapest, of taking advantage of a favorable opportunity to incorporate Bosnia and Herzegovina in Hungary. Aehrenthal was, however, far more susceptible to the machinations of the Magyar leaders, and, above all of Count Stephen Tisza, than was supposed by the general public.

Slavs, and Ukrainians in turn. The "dictatorship paragraph" enabled the bureaucrats to meet the so-called "necessities of State"—the election of delegations and the voting of recruits for the army—by the aid of a parliamentary majority variously composed from the German middle-class parties and the Polish Club, with the tacit support of Italians and Rumanians. Beyond that, in the country, and as between the various nationalities, things were allowed to go their own way.<sup>2</sup> Efforts to reach a compromise in Bohemia, between the Germans and Czechs, whose struggles had sacrificed the country to obstruction (in this case, of course, German obstruction)—broke down in 1910; really because neither the Emperor nor the Ministry put any energy into such efforts. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the consequent diplomatic defeat of Serbia in March 1908, did much to spoil the hitherto friendly and loyal temper of the South Slavs. It increased the sympathy of their non-clerical political leaders for Serbia and Montenegro, and won the support even of many Catholic leaders among the Slovenes and Croats of the Adriatic for their Yugoslav (but Orthodox) "brothers" in Belgrade. A powerful contributory factor here was the fatal repercussion of Magyar Imperialism (which treated the Croats of the triune kingdom as "helots" and put the Croat constitution out of action), on the Austrian Slavs of the South, *i.e.*, the Slovenes and Croats in Carniola, Istria, and Dalmatia. The ardent Catholicism of the masses in these countries, and their consequent antagonism to Serbian orthodoxy, had always been regarded as a solid guarantee of their loyalty. Soon, however, there were signs that it was disappearing. The priests who acted as leaders of the Slovene majority, Dr. Ignacius Krek and Dr. Korosec, though both belonged to the Catholic clergy, came forward after the Bosnian annexation crisis as champions of the Yugoslav idea, at first in the form of a "trialistic organization" for the Habsburg Monarchy, which they hoped would one day lead to the adhesion of the Serbs to a Greater Croatia. It spread rapidly both there and among the people in

<sup>2</sup> The heir to the Throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his immediate circle of friends and political intimates, had been irreconcilably opposed to the democratization of the suffrage. The fall of Beck and the rise of Bienerth to the post of Prime Minister was brought about by this group, assisted by the Conservative wing of the Christian Socialist party, with the ultimate aim of discrediting the Universal Suffrage Parliament by a sort of political sabotage from above.



Bosnia. In Galicia the result, after 1908, of franchise reform was a rapid increase in Radicalism. Social Democracy and the democratic Peasants' party gained, while the Conservative nobles lost ground to them and to the National Democrats of the middle classes. The advance of these National Democrats—an all-Polish party which had spread from Warsaw over the country—again brought into prominence the old idea of restoring an independent and united Polish national State, while the struggle of the Ruthenians in eastern and central Galicia against Polish oppression also broke out anew. The historic opposition between Russia and Austria, thrust once more into the forefront of European politics by the annexation crisis, spelled disaster to the internal peace of that part of the Austrian Empire which was most exposed to hostile attack, just as the same specter had done in the 'sixties and 'seventies.

Ardent Catholics as they were, the Poles, including the Imperial Governor of Galicia, and the Conservatives who dominated the Diet, supported the Orthodox agitation against the Uniate Greek Church, thus complicating every existing difficulty in Eastern Galicia. Russian propaganda among the Ruthenian peasants, supported from Moscow and Petrograd, was assiduously preparing the ground for a war which people now began to think of as imminent. In Galicia, indeed "moral propaganda" had been going on ever since 1907. Local officialdom, long completely Polonized and constituting since 1905 the bulwark of the all-Polish party, became altogether detached from Austrian traditions; and the Austrian Government from then on had no direct controlling authority in its Polish territories. The only case where the Austrian Government, or any of the Ministries, could bring its will to bear at all on major issues, was when the Governor was personally inclined to support it or could be compelled to do so; and even such modified influence could be exerted only after a painful series of compromises, effected through the Polish Minister in accordance with the wishes of the Polish Club. Only in the most formal sense could Austria as a whole be said to rule over Galicia. The real rulers and administrators in the Galician Diet were the political leaders of the majority and, in the Reichsrat, the Polish Club.

Thus, over wide areas of the realm, lines of fracture in the old Austrian system of law and administration had been revealed. Social-Democratic agitation had everywhere begun to infiltrate the ex-

panding army of State officials. Efforts to organize them into trade unions met with a measure of success among railway and postal employees and even among those of the Department of Finance. The Government perceived with great alarm that the repeated concessions, by which it endeavored to recall the old civil service spirit of absolute impartiality, loyalty, and obedience, had ceased to have any effect on the lower grades, even among the Germans.

In Hungary, meantime, the entire political structure of the Kingdom and the Crown of St. Stephen had been persistently shaken by the reign of force, first of the Prime Minister, Count Khuen-Hedervary, and then of his successor, Count Stephen Tisza, which kept down the Kossuthite opposition and suppressed every non-Magyar nationality.

In Austria and in Hungary hopelessness was everywhere the mood and keynote of all the elements in national and social life which were excluded from a direct share of power. The view that the Dualism of 1867 was the root cause of the progressive decline in the power of the Monarchy at home and abroad was widely held. Notably, at the turn of the century, the great German Christian-Socialist party had been brought to this view by its leader, Dr. Karl Lueger, who knew that he was here at one with the heir to the throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand. His accession, it was universally believed, would mean great and dangerous struggles; at the same time the Conservatives, and many groups among the Slavs and Rumanians, hoped that it would ultimately produce a stable reform of the whole constitution of the Monarchy. In Austria, the Government, with Baron, later Count, Bienerth—the grandson of Schmerling—at its head, was completely sterile. In the Reichsrat obstruction reigned. The wirepulling of deputies for the benefit of their constituencies, their party or their local interests, went on, as in the days of Dr. von Koerber. The decline in administrative efficiency became more and more patent, even in its daily workings, owing partly to the paralysis of legislation, partly to the perpetual increase of official posts. All this indicated the growing senility of the whole apparatus of State and the lack of moral energy in the ruling classes. Their rigid adhesion to traditional bureaucratic methods displayed a total want of constructive statesmanship. The belated effort made by Count Bienerth in the appointment of a special Commission for Administrative Reform was never seriously

meant. Admirable work was put in by many of the experts associated with it; but it was all brought to naught by the silent, but irresistible opposition of the governing bureaucrats and the complete lack of interest on the part of the parliamentary groups, including the two great German middle-class parties, the Christian Socialists, and the German Nationals. The Social Democratic party, true to the Marxian class-war formula, took no part in such attempts at reform.

At the general election of 1911, the Christian Socialists lost seats. Count Bienerth, who depended on them for his majority, resigned, and was replaced as Prime Minister by Count Stuerghk. His Government, since he appointed neither German nor Czech national Ministers, was purely bureaucratic. He had himself been an open and determined opponent of universal suffrage; his appointment was therefore an index of how little the Emperor, or the Archduke and heir to the throne,—who on this point agreed with him,—now expected from the democratic franchise. Court and ruling circles had, in fact, already given it up. “*Premièrement avilir et puis démolir*”—such was the *mot* expressing the Court’s attitude toward Parliament that went the rounds in conversation. Among the various races, nationalist and democratic feeling had gone ahead with a rush since the 1911 elections. They did not in any sense regard the work of parliamentary suicide, carried on in the House and Diets by a continuous obstruction that constantly degenerated into mere personalities and abuse, as implying any moral or political damage to their national interests, or as affording any justification for the contempt for Austrian parliamentarism, openly expressed at home and abroad. Reproaches and threats of the sort perpetually breathed forth by the Viennese and German provincial press against Czech and South Slav obstruction entirely failed of their alleged purpose. This was not surprising, since it was the Germans who had worked out the technique of parliamentary obstruction, both in stage setting and in noise, in their struggles with the Badeni Government. It would however be quite wrong to suppose that at this stage the non-Magyar peoples in Hungary and the non-Germans in Austria were engaged in serious efforts to destroy the Hapsburg Monarchy, or to break away from it. National Radicalism was most fully developed among the Czechs; but even their most advanced politicians thought only of restoring a State personality to the lands of the



Bohemian Crown, and such autonomy for the units composing their lands as would put Bohemia on a level with Hungary. No one yet dreamed of complete political, economic, and customs separation from the other parts of the realm. Before the eyes of the Czechs stood the model given them by the Magyars. Deep dislike of the central régime of Vienna had grown among the masses in every Slav land, *pari passu* with disappointment at the outcome of the grant of the suffrage. But even among the Czechs this mood had not yet developed into a desire for separation from the common union under the hereditary House of Habsburg. Among the Slavs the idea of the union of all Slav lands gained ground rapidly after the annexation crisis; among educated Croats and Slovenes the tie of a common language and near kinship with the Balkan Slavs represented the pull of a common nationality strong enough to prevail over centuries of separation and over the deep gulf between Catholicism and Orthodoxy. The driving force here was supplied by the bitter and ceaseless feud in which Croatian politics had been involved by Magyar Imperialism. Under the Compromise of 1868, Croatia's old rights to a limited State independence, maintained within its eight hundred years of union with Hungary, have been nominally recognized. Actually, however, it was subjected to economic and financial domination from Budapest, which further stressed the opposition between Hungary and Croatia, and grew in proportion as Magyar leaders and governments expressed their own nationalism more and more definitely over the whole area of Hungarian sway. A dangerous turn in the struggle between Croatia and Hungary was reached when Count Khuen-Hedervary, who, as Ban, or Royal Governor of Croatia, had ruled the country for twenty years, partly by corrupting the party leaders in the helpless Croatian Diet, partly by the ruthless use of police powers against the educated classes, became Hungarian Prime Minister. Even worse was the régime of Stephen Tisza, the last Hungarian Prime Minister appointed by Francis Joseph. He represented the complete embodiment of the shortsighted and embittered national antagonism of the Magyar nobles for the Slav and Latin peoples of Hungary; his rule saw a fatal growth in the mischief that was destroying the dynastic principle in the south and southwest. In the southeast, and notably in Siebenbürgen, a complete solidarity between the educated classes and the peasants among the Rumanians had been created



by their sense that they must remain political helots until the Magyar ascendancy established in 1867 was broken. It was very generally believed that this might happen either as the result of an unfortunate war, or of a curtailment of Magyar power by the dynasty. The death of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand seemed to end this second hope forever.

Actually, of course, it was in Serbia that the spark fell. There, ever since the restoration of the Karageorgevitch dynasty and, above all, since the failure of Serbian resistance to the annexation of Bosnia, an active agitation had been carried on both against the Habsburg Monarchy and to unite all Yugoslavs in the annexed provinces and Croatia. With singular blindness, the Hungarian Government had for centuries used the Serbian Orthodox minority, comprising less than 20 per cent of the population of Croatia and Slavonia, as an instrument for disintegrating Croatian parties. They hoped to dethrone the idea of a Croatian State, and to create a majority in the Croatian Diet, opposed to the idea of national Croatian independence, and inclined to Magyarism. Now, it was this very policy that was to plague them. Serbism, strengthened in Croatia, joined hands with the young Croats in a coalition which achieved a majority in the Diet. Budapest strove to wear down this majority by repeated dissolutions, and by a policy of force, marked by disgraceful political prosecutions, such as the notorious Agram treason trial. It entirely failed to shake its hold on the population. This Croatian-Magyar struggle of 1908 to 1914 produced the national leaders who, first in Switzerland, and later in Paris and London, spun the political web that, with the support of the Entente Governments, ultimately compassed a complete separation of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, and the Slovenes generally from the Habsburg Empire, and created a Yugoslav State under Serbia. Let it again be emphasized, however, that, in 1914, the great mass of the Croatian and Slovene people were still far from harboring any such plans. They were confined to the "intelligentsia." The best proof of this is afforded by the enthusiasm with which, as a matter of fact, even the Orthodox inhabitants of what had been the southeastern military frontier, man for man, appeared at the mobilization centers, and for four years fought heroically in every theater of war, and in none with more devotion than against Italian invasion, in the defense of the Empire and its integrity.

Turning to Austria in the narrower sense—that is to the Kingdoms and lands represented in the Reichsrat in Vienna—we note that this “legal” description of the western half of the Monarchy had become a mere empty formula. In the magnificent Reichsrat building the lands and peoples of Austria were simply not represented. Again, in March 1914, the Reichsrat, put out of action by Czech obstruction, was prorogued indefinitely, under the gloomiest auspices for the Government. The inner circle in Viennese politics knew that Count Stuerghk and the Court were counting on keeping the central democratic Parliament adjourned for as long as possible; knew, too, that the Minister President was by no means loath to take advantage of the opportunity given him by the Czech Radicals to get rid of it altogether. Ever since the annexation crisis, considerations of foreign policy tended more and more to determine the Monarchy’s domestic policy. It seemed, in those political, Court, and army circles which influenced and shaped foreign policy, that the endless trouble in Parliament, the incessant fighting of Germans and Czechs, Germans and Slavs, Croats and Italians, Poles and Ruthenians, in varying groupings but with unvarying animosity, was bringing the Habsburg Monarchy into discredit in the eyes of Europe, and was even jeopardizing its security. Abroad, it had long been assumed that the death of the venerable Francis Joseph, would not merely sever Austria from Hungary, but would reveal the impossible position of the Austrian State itself. This view was reinforced by parliamentary obstruction and scenes often far from laughable. In the eyes of the Court, of diplomacy, and of the bureaucrats, here was the major cause of the increasingly low esteem in which Austria was held as a factor in Europe. Such a judgment came to be accepted as axiomatic, thanks, largely, in the first instance, to an abundant French literature about Austria published at the end of the century, of which *Andrè Chèradame’s* well-known volume was a notable example. An important contributory factor was the extremely friendly political relationship established and maintained between Paris and the Czech leaders. The leading Czech politician, Dr. Karel Kramarz, had for years been on intimate terms with leading men in France and Russia, and with Imperialistic politicians in Britain, and by the ’nineties, he had impressed on influential groups in western Europe and in Russia, the view that the Austrian problem could be understood only in connection with in-

ternal conditions and the Emperor's foreign policy. Even Dr. Kramarz, however, was very far from making the destruction of the Empire, or the separation of the Bohemian territories from the Monarchy, an object of his policy or of that of the Slavs. He was rather the spokesman of the idea of Austro-Slavism, in the sense in which it was voiced, despite occasional deviations, by Palácky and Rieger, both friends of France and also of Russia. With increased point and passion, as time went on, he opposed both the fundamental axioms of Francis Joseph's foreign policy—the indissolubility of the alliance with the German Empire, and the Dualist structure of the Danubian Monarchy, carrying with it, as it did, an inflated preponderance of the Magyar element both in relation to the problem of nationalities in Hungary, and a controlling Magyar influence over the common foreign policy. Dr. Kramarz stood for such a thoroughgoing reform of the Ausgleich of 1867 as would give the Slavs, in Austria and in Hungary, a chance for free development, unhampered by Magyar or German ascendancy. This, in his view, by paving the way for friendship with the growing Slav States in the Balkans, would mitigate the antagonistic rivalry that, ever since the eighteenth century, had existed between the Danubian Monarchy and Russia. The pivot of his ideas was what the twentieth century called "Neo-Slavism." Broadly speaking this foreign policy of Dr. Kramarz became the political creed of the South Slavs. In sharpest opposition to such views were those gaining ground among the younger generation of German politicians in Austria. For them, the future of the Austro-Hungarian ruler was to be a "sub-king" in an imperial Germany. The German alliance and German-Magyar hegemony were the key positions in the fight that must be waged against the efforts of Czechs, Poles, and South Slavs to effect a federal transformation of the Empire to their own advantage.

Events in the Balkan peninsula after 1908, had profound reactions, as can easily be understood, on Austrian internal conditions. Universal suffrage, the steady development, under local autonomy, of democracy and nationalism, and the increased political activity of the middle class, created a soil far more favorable to imported tendencies hostile to the Dual and Triple Alliance than could be found in Hungary, where an oligarchic and chauvinist Government was supported by Magyar nobles and gentry in close alliance with High Finance. Every Austrian, looking at his own country with



European eyes, knew from 1908 on that the Habsburg Monarchy had become a European problem; that there was no longer any valid distinction, for the nationalities which it embraced, between internal and external policy; that the one continually reacted upon the other; and that, at first almost imperceptibly, but soon quite unmistakably, the forces pressing from east, southeast, west, and south, upon the corresponding national units in Austria and Hungary were dissolving a connection which centuries of statesmanship had wrought into the fabric of the dynastic, authoritarian State. But the very people who ought to have seen this, and seeing, to have been governed thereby in their political actions—the German middle classes and the bureaucracy in Austria, the nobles, gentry, financial, and commercial interests in Hungary, in other words, the ruling classes in the two States to all intents and purposes saw nothing. The writing on the wall was there, but they remained obstinately devoted to their old political axioms and objects, maintenance of Dualism, deep distrust of Italy, unconditional antagonism to the Slavs and their federal ideas, and unlimited trust in the alliance with the German Empire and in its military power to protect them. In Hungary, the ruling nobility had never found it necessary to pay any serious attention to what was going on among the non-Magyars—Rumanians, Ruthenians, Slovaks, and Croats—who formed a majority of the population. All they could do was to repress, with a contemptuous use of power, such specific symptoms of dissatisfaction as revealed themselves among the upper and middle classes of these nationalities. In Austria, where political life was much more broadly and deeply developed, the Germans strong as they were, remained rooted in a point of view which circumstances had long left behind, and held stiffly to the notion of their own historical “primacy.” In this they allowed themselves to be influenced, more and more, by the rising spirit of Imperialist nationalism in Germany. Accordingly, they began to conceive of a solution of political and nationalist problems exclusively in terms of force: the force of which they believed themselves to be securely possessed in alliance with the German Empire, with the Poles, and with the Magyars. Actually, the greater part of German public opinion in Austria had no knowledge of the mood of the Western and Southern Slavs; or, if such knowledge reached it, saw nothing in these nationalist aspirations save evil intentions and open enmity to Em-



pire and State. In general, they saw the Austrian State principle as a purely German inheritance, which it was their duty and special function to maintain in the long obsolete form of a bureaucratically centralized authoritarian State. At the same time, a growing radical-nationalist section within German Austria was disparaging what was "old-Austrian" or "old-Liberal," and openly declaring that Austria ought to direct its policy along the all-German line so powerfully represented by the German Empire. The progressive nationalization of German policy in Austria made rapid strides upon the accentuation of the political rivalry between Germany, on the one hand, and France, England, and Russia on the other, which took place after 1907. This, of course was true not only of the Liberal parties of the German National Union, but also of their Conservative allies. For, since the death of Dr. Lueger, the second great middle-class party of Austria, the Christian Socialists, had likewise become much more pronouncedly nationalistic; while even the Austrian Social Democratic party, strongly internationalist as it was, had necessarily submitted to a sort of nationalist pull after the formation of independent Czech, South Slav, and Polish Social Democratic parties.

Anyone who seeks to pass judgment on the swift steps taken by the rulers in Vienna and Budapest, after the murder of the Archduke, must have in mind a clear picture of internal conditions in the two States composing the Monarchy, as well as of the social and administrative breakdown in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had begun when annexation was completed in 1908, and which rapidly increased thereafter. It was felt in high military circles, as by leading men in diplomatic and bureaucratic ones, that, as at the time of the Balkan complications in 1908 and 1912, the question, "To be or not to be?" was put to the Monarchy as a whole—a question, this time set in the very forefront of things and given every emphasis. All were convinced that the sole cure for the internal and external wounds from which the Habsburg Empire was suffering was to be found in a determined use of the long-established diplomatic and military forces at the disposal of the dynasty. Why, at the critical moment, this view prevailed with the aged Emperor, and how far he realized its full consequences, entailing as they did the declaration of war on Serbia, must, like the whole problem of war-guilt, here be left aside. We are solely concerned with the effect which the

declaration of war by Germany and Austria in rapid succession had on the internal conditions of the Empire and on its government and administration. It must however again be noted that it is entirely wrong to date the break-up of the Monarchy, which followed after four years of unexampled war, from the time of its outbreak, as has been done by recent foreign critics of the last phase of Austrian constitutional history. Austria's declarations of war on Serbia and Russia, immediately followed by the declarations of war on the Danubian Monarchy by France and England, were undoubtedly received quite differently by Austrian Slavs, and by Austrian Germans, Magyars, or Poles. It is, furthermore, certain that the powerful influence of the German and Czech Social Democratic parties, and of their press, which preached opposition in principle to war as such, helped to prevent any trace of war enthusiasm among great sections of the industrial population. But in Austria, as in other countries, the average man took the traditional, nineteenth-century view of war as a necessary, or, at least, unavoidable, means of settling irreconcilable differences between States, and thought of it as the great driving force in the historical evolution of nations. This view remained; behind it was the long tradition of the glamor and glory of war, handed down to the peoples of the continent from Napoleonic times, and by no means shorn of its romantic appeal. Universal and compulsory military service had, in fact, brought it home for the first time to the masses of the people. National struggles within Austria, and endless conflicts over the Compromise with Hungary had long weakened the natural sense of solidarity among the races out of which the Empire had been slowly built up; the purely dynastic idea had lost much of its cohesive power. Yet, in 1914, there remained a strong and widely diffused sense of the great common interests involved in the continued existence of the Empire: a sense that, for most of its peoples, had centuries of history behind it. This instinctive feeling was reinforced by the widely accepted idea that a war in which the very existence of the Habsburg Monarchy was at stake had been forced upon it, from without, by Serbia and by Russia. For half a century, at least, the existence of this Austro-Russian conflict had found a place in the political equipment of the veriest "man in the street," in every part and among every race in Austria. Deeply buried, but never forgotten, the sense of the Empire and of the State as a whole persisted. Its positive

elements elude analysis, rooted as they are, in the last resort, in the purely emotional life of the individual, and in that part of his thought which can never be rationalized. In any event, there was enough force in this historic sense of corporate unity to carry through the mobilization of the vast masses of conscripts without a hitch or hindrance of any kind. At the same time, the Emergency Provisions, described in the previous chapter, passed smoothly into effect.

## CHAPTER IV

### WAR GOVERNMENT AND ITS SPIRIT

THE whole body of decrees, the preparation of which has already been described, designed to regularize the state of emergency for the duration of the War, came into force in the first week after the rejection of the Serbian ultimatum. They were issued by the Cabinet, on the authority of the "dictatorship paragraph" (Paragraph 14) of the Constitution, empowering it as the executive, in the event of the Reichsrat not being in session, to issue decrees having the force of law, such decrees to be submitted to the Reichsrat immediately on its meeting, in order that both Houses of Parliament might by resolution confirm, or suspend, this emergency legislation. Since March 1914, Parliament had been prorogued, nor had the Prime Minister any intention of calling it together on the outbreak of war—a flatly unconstitutional attitude, but one in which he could count on the support of the German middle-class parties and of practically the whole of the German middle-class press. No one in military or Court circles or in the bureaucratic hierarchy contemplated the continuous session, during a war against Serbia and Russia, of a parliament in which the non-German peoples were in a majority. A perfectly free hand was therefore given to the Government, composed as it was exclusively of officials, to establish the state of emergency precisely along the lines prepared. The first and most important of the necessary decrees had a formal, constitutional sanction. The law of May 5, 1869, empowered the Government to suspend the liberties of the subject in the event of war, or when its outbreak was imminent, by Cabinet decree. Such a decree appeared on July 25, 1914. A series of further decrees was issued at the same time, as a result of the suspension of citizen rights, which introduced special regulations governing the possession of munitions of war, weapons, etc., as also other decrees which forbade the introduction of Serbian newspapers and "regulated" postal communications, that is, established a rigid censorship of letters, telegrams, etc. These provisions were at different dates extended to cover Russian, Belgian, French, English, and, later, Italian and Rumanian newspapers, books, and other postal matter. To the same category



belong new passport regulations which were established at every frontier, and a safe-conduct system within the military zone. The military commanders regarded the regulations under this head as altogether insufficient from the standpoint of military security. It must be remembered that, for a long time before the War, the General Staff and the leading Austrian generals had felt no confidence in the higher policies of Francis Joseph and his ministries. Military leaders regarded the home policy of Austrian Prime Ministers, especially since the introduction of universal, equal, and direct suffrage, with the deepest distrust. They viewed what seemed to them the culpable mildness of the Government to social and national radicalism, above all among Czechs, Ruthenes, and Slovenes, as having for a considerable period of time constituted a most serious menace to the Monarchy and the State.

Nor had Austrian generals any love for the Poles. Nearly all the higher officers of the Austro-Hungarian army had, from the middle 'eighties, spent a large part of their terms of active service in Galicia, with the result that army circles well knew the special conditions in this Province, and were highly critical of them. The traditional views of the Austrian officers' corps as to the proper function of a State administration were outraged by finding the Polish nobility omnipotent all over the country, the politicians, who dominated the Diet and the Polish Delegation, in full control of administration, and the entire civil service, from 1870 on, manned from end to end by Poles. Add to this that at the end of the 'nineties a new radical and nationalist movement was rapidly gaining adherents, among both the peasants and the urban working classes, who had joined the Social Democratic party, and among educated Jews and Poles. Consequently a province that would hold a key-position in any future war with Russia presented to the generals in command a very disquieting picture. There was often friction between the military and civil authorities in Galicia, into which the Government and even the Emperor in person were sooner or later drawn. And yet no change was made in Francis Joseph's fundamental policy toward Galicia which indeed had remained unalterable for more than forty years. That policy consisted in recognizing the Poles, of course under the leadership of the Conservative nobles, as the administrators of all Galicia, and as the exclusive ruling element over all the national groups in the Province. Such was the policy on which he had resolved in 1868;

such was the policy to which he adhered until at last a change was forced upon him by the events of war.

The distrust felt by Austrian generals for the "national" policy followed by Austrian governments ever since the Taaffe régime came to a head after the outbreak of the War. The dictatorship bestowed by the emergency regulations upon the Supreme Command of the army gave it an instrument for translating into action the criticisms it had been passing on Government and administration throughout the last generation. Hence the ill-starred political intervention of the Supreme Command and of the General Staff and General Headquarters, which contributed more than any other single factor to the political and national break-up of the monarchical machine, and so to its infallible ruin. Long before the War, military circles in Austria had admired the dictatorial will and courage of Stephen Tisza, and the iron hand with which he held down his political adversaries and above all, the non-Magyar peoples in Hungary; and General Headquarters now wanted to see Austria governed in similar fashion. The use made by Czech leaders of their political rights, their agitation for a Kingdom of Bohemia on a level with that of Hungary, their open hostility to the Austrian military system, and their efforts to establish close ties with Slavs abroad and with France—all this seemed to the military authorities frank treason. There were plenty of men high up in the army and on the General Staff who saw no other way of safeguarding the Monarchy than by a ruthless use of force, under a non-parliamentary régime of repression. The popularity of the aged Emperor with the officer class had for long been impaired, because they ascribed the growing political evils in the country to his weakness and his indifference to national radical movements among the people.

The local governors had long been in specially bad odor with the military. In Galicia, where the greater part of the peace army had been barracked for a generation, conflicts between the army chiefs and the local authorities were constantly arising out of the license permitted to political parties. In Galicia the military leaders distrusted the Ruthenians as well as the Poles. The reason for this was that the all-Polish party continually demanded, and often secured active repression of the educated Ruthenians; and these measures in the last two decades before the War had powerfully assisted Ruthenian propaganda by Russian and Orthodox emissaries. More-

over, German and Hungarian officers in the Ruthenian areas felt as though they were in an enemy country. As for the Poles, it was well known that the 1905 revolution had given a mighty impetus to Polish aspirations for the restoration of an independent Kingdom of Poland; and further, that the Austrian Poles only welcomed war with Russia because, whatever the issue of the conflict, they believed it must bring about the fulfilment of their national desire for a free and united Poland.

It was much the same in the South Slav areas. Pan-Serbian agitation had been gaining ground tremendously ever since the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; while the anti-Croatian policy of every Magyar Government was converting the Croatian educated class to the principle of Serbian leadership of the Jugoslavs.

Holding such views, the Supreme Command determined on a regulation which was to have extremely important results. On July 31, 1914, an imperial decree was issued, covering the whole Empire, and dealing with the transference of functions by the political administration, which contained the following significant provisions:

It is the function of the Army High Commands, in order to safeguard military interests within the compass of the political administration, and within the sphere of influence of the political head of the area in question, to issue decrees, give orders, and enforce the observance of the same by those whom they concern, in the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, including the Grand Duchy of Cracow, the Duchy of Bukovina, the District areas of Bielitz, Freistadt, Friedeck, and Teschen, and the Town parishes of Bielitz and Friedeck in the Duchy of Silesia, as well as in the districts of Mistek, Neutitschein, Ostrau, and Weisskirchen, in the Markgravate of Moravia. Where the Commander-in-Chief makes use of this power, he shall at once communicate any ordinance he issues to the department head in charge of the administration. The said department head, the political and police authorities under him, and the communal councils, shall faithfully execute all such orders and regulations issued by the Supreme Command.

When war broke out on the Italian front, this regulation also came into force in the Tyrol, in Istria, Gorizia, Gradiska, Trieste, Dalmatia, and Carinthia. The effect was that over a large part of the territory of the whole Austrian state, civil administration was superseded by military. In fact, over the greater part of that territory,



civil administration and government were abrogated. The activity of the authorities, in areas where the Supreme Command was in control, depended solely on the good pleasure of the military leaders. Governors, provincial presidents, and district heads had to obey their dictates and to reconcile them as best they might with the normal and legal state of things.

Since, however, administration was divided into two great systems, the central administration of the State, and the free self-government of autonomous communes, districts, and provinces, with few ordinary bonds and ties to link them together, the influence of the military authorities had likewise to be secured to cover this autonomous system. This was done by an Imperial Decree of July 25, 1914, which laid upon the communes the obligation of coöperating in carrying out legislative prescriptions bearing on the armed power and military defense of the Monarchy. Thus "Every public official entrusted with matters promoting the armed power of the military defense of the Monarchy shall carry on his work until he is relieved by his superior authority and the superior authority of his office."

Militarization of the railways came into force on the day of mobilization; the actual transference of control being prescribed in a wealth of special decrees. All railways, State and private, with the whole of their equipment and personnel were placed at the disposal of the army; moreover, from the day of mobilization on, the direction of the entire system was subject to the Department for Military Transport and the line and station officers under it. Rules and regulations governing relations between military railway control and private and national railway services had long been worked out in full detail. They were, in many cases, completed by the prescriptions of the secret "Orientation Memorandum."

Emergency decrees at once made large inroads upon the legal rights of citizens. A Cabinet Decree of July 25, 1914, transferred a large number of offenses and crimes from local courts to the regular courts of the army, *e.g.*:

1. High treason; lèse majesté; offenses against members of the imperial house; disturbance of the public peace; insurrection; riot; violent disturbance of a court, authority, or meeting called by the Government for the transaction of public business; wilful damage to railways, to any object belonging to and concerned with them: wilful actions of a sort constituting a special danger to railroad trans-



- port; wilful damage to State telegraphs; giving assistance—by hiding or otherwise—to a deserter.
2. Violence or threats of violence against official superiors; murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily injury, or robbery of persons on active service, whether in the army, navy, local militia, the territorials, the army police, or persons attached to the gendarmerie, within the areas of protection extended the railway and telephone service, or within protected coastal areas, as organized by the military authorities.
  3. Other cases of violence (as defined in 85-88 of the Penal Code) including arson, if an offense against any person who is, or whose property is, within a military or militia area, or affects any of the persons mentioned in Paragraph 2.
  4. A further list of offenses is specified, from the Laws of 1863 and 1885, governing explosives; that of 1888 on Submarine cables; that of 1912, "the Service Law," and laws applying to the hiding of a person charged with any of these offenses.

Cases under 2 and 3 fall exclusively within the competence of the military tribunals, if the action affects not only the one person cited as injured by it, or his property, but extends to other persons and other properties.

Military tribunals administered the general criminal code, but their procedure was their own. The immense power thus put into the hands of commanders is plain and the fatal effect bound to be produced by such comprehensive militarization of judicial and punitive machinery in a state so torn by national strife as were the mixed-language areas of Austria. Nor was this all. A further decree of November 4, 1914, gave military courts competence in those parts of the realm where, as a result of war, civil courts had ceased to function. The civil population of wide areas was thus subjected for long periods to military law. In many cases, the actual consequences were fearful, and yet it must be admitted that, to some extent, the provision was necessary to secure the most elementary form of protection for property and person, after the withdrawal of the civil authorities from regions devastated by war.

Naturally, trial by jury had to be suspended in the war zone immediately on the outbreak of hostilities; and internal and political conditions caused the extension of this provision from the same date to cover the entire realm. This was a wholly unconstitutional procedure. The defense of its actions, made by Count Stuerghk's

Government, when challenged in Parliament in 1917, shows that the only considerations which it had in mind were military ones. The following passage is from the Government's statement:

In view of the continuous propaganda that had been going on in South Slav regions and in Galicia, it was necessary to suspend the operation there of the jury courts, if impartial and independent justice was to be secure. Events however proved that it was not enough to confine the suspension of jury courts to the regions in the neighborhood of the Serbian and Russian frontiers. The declarations of war on the part of England and France turned the entire coast line of the Monarchy and its hinterlands into a war zone or area of advance. Soon after the outbreak of the War, moreover, facts were to show that the enemy was endeavoring to sow seeds of domestic hatred, by proclamations and promises, throughout this hinterland. Practical and psychological considerations also entered in. The calling up of the older classes of the Landsturm and the enlistment of numerous persons for war service withdrew a large proportion of the juries from their legal duties. As regard those who were left, it was to be feared that they might yield to the increasing pressure of external influences and so take into consideration circumstances and events that had nothing to do with the business in hand, while day to day difficulties might deprive them of the quiet and calm of mind that form the most substantial assurance of passionless judgment of legal cases and justice that is impartial and independent.

This array of dictatorial decrees was the Government's instrument for a task, which, as conceived by itself, was to secure "internal peace and order within the whole territory of the State," in other words, to silence any and every political or national expression by the various races in question. In this way the Government thought to safeguard the Austro-Hungarian armies fighting on the northern, southern, and southeastern fronts against movements in their rear hostile to them or to the State, and to protect the whole work of war-time administration, and all the activities radiating in every direction, from the Ministry of War in Vienna. Every constitutional State at war illustrates the attempt to extend the limits of "emergency conditions" in such a way as to acquire unlimited dictatorial power for itself and its agencies. The weakening of popular institutions and the suppression of freedom of opinion form a part of this tendency. In every belligerent state there was also an obvious

tendency to subordinate the war government itself, with all the enhanced powers given it and its authorities by war, to purely military objects; to accept as the first law the demands of administration; and to subdue the spirit of the people and of public institutions entirely to one overruling war aim. This spells militarization. In no other country had rulers gone so far, in advance, in this effort, as in Austria. There, from the very beginning, the conviction ruled that there was only one way of inducing the Slav and Latin elements in the population to endure the sufferings of war both in the war zone and in the hinterland without rising against them, and that was the unrestricted, unlimited, and quite ruthless use of the power of command and punishment. From the beginning, no task seemed so urgent as that of securing the dumb submission of a will-less population through systematic arrangements, on strict police and militarist lines, for fettering both the individual and those national units that were regarded as "unreliable." The reasons were plain enough. Large sections of Czechs, South Slavs, Italians, and Ruthenians, as well as German working people, were from the beginning hostile to the War. On the one hand, as has been explained, the military chiefs had no confidence in the bureaucratic chiefs; on the other, these bureaucratic chiefs, in their turn, had no confidence in the effectiveness of the victory propaganda which was designed to keep the war spirit alive. Conducted in the main by the military sections of the War Press Headquarters, this propaganda forced by General Headquarters upon the regular purveyors of publicity was absolutely devoid of emotional grip. From the start, the militarists attempted to use the unlimited dictatorial authority given to the Army Command by the emergency decrees—which, so to speak, handed the entire administrative apparatus of the State over to them tied and bound—for the purpose of forcing upon civilian departments and authorities that domestic policy which General Headquarters thought vital. Thus, for example, it found it convenient to Germanize many of the old familiar place names in the Italian parts of the Southern Tyrol. In this way it dealt on military lines with the irredenta, taking the steps which, in its view, political officials ought to have taken long ago by police regulations and political prosecutions.

The unremitting effort to concentrate everything in the hands of the Supreme Command led to the creation of an emergency cen-



tral department, designed to coördinate all the agencies necessary for the internal control of the State under the directing mediums of the Supreme Command, the General Staff, and the Ministry of War. This was known and widely feared as the War Surveillance Office, and its origin and organization have already been described. In relation to one important point, it was at once evident that the plans for this organization, so carefully laid down in the "Orientation Memorandum," could not be followed. In the original plan, the War Surveillance Office was formally subordinated to the "unitary" Ministry of War, and was thus regarded as operating with equal sovereign authority in both Austria and Hungary. This at once proved impracticable. Count Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister, refused to recognize an office directed from Vienna as competent in Hungary; from the day of mobilization he excluded Hungary from its sphere of operations. Not that Tisza and the Hungarian Government refused to militarize Hungary: there too a system of coöperation was worked out and maintained between the State authorities and the army commanders, the General Staff and the Ministry of War, for securing the "home front" against "unreliable" groups, that is to say, against the Serbs and Croats, the Ruthenes and Rumanians. They did, however, draw the line at any sort of common action with Austria, except in so far as was involved in the existence of the great common army and its unified command. From the very beginning, Count Tisza was determined to carry through with an iron hand the war policy he thought necessary in Hungary; in that purely Magyar policy he tolerated no interference from Austria. A constitutional anomaly of a strange type was thus presented. In Vienna there was set up, under the formal aegis of the Ministry of War a body that by the terms of the 1867 Compromise was common to Austria and Hungary, a new central organization endowed with a terrible plenitude of authority. But its commands applied exclusively to Austrian offices, and reached the western half of the Empire only. There was yet another peculiarity about it. The institution of this new, war-time center was not communicated to the people by any law nor by the decree of any responsible minister; at the moment of mobilization it was simply there; established as the outcome of the secret "Orientation Memorandum," and set up by the coöperation of the Cabinet and the Ministry of War. All that the newspapers were allowed to say was that a War Surveillance



Office existed; no public intimation was vouchsafed either as to the composition of the body, the nature of its tasks, or the principles on which it was to operate. From the beginning to the end, the office and its activities were shrouded in the thickest possible darkness by the rigid and nervous press censorship which was itself, as has been pointed out, an important branch of the secret duties of the new office. The first gleam of light on the true nature and enormous power which the War Surveillance Office had obtained at the time of mobilization and which it has exercised most fully ever since, was cast in 1917, when Parliament was summoned, shortly after his accession, on the advice of the counsellors of the young Emperor Charles. The first knowledge that reached the peoples of Austria of the true composition of their War Government then came to them from speeches and questions in the House. From then on they gradually learned something of this wholly unconstitutional body, which, though formally common to both halves of the realm, affected only Austrian citizens, and though subject to the unitary Minister of War, was not responsible to the Austrian Parliament.

A more detailed description may now be given of government outside the war zone. In its method there was, broadly speaking, no change between the outbreak of war and the catastrophe. Two periods, however, can be distinguished: from July 31, 1914, to the murder of Count Stuerghk in the late summer of 1916, or to the death of Francis Joseph on November 21, 1916; and the reign of Emperor Charles. In many respects, the bureaucratic methods of Count Stuerghk were followed in the second period; nevertheless, the latter does show certain new features, partly due to the personal character of the young Emperor, partly to the duration of the War itself, and its economic and political crises. The decisive event separating the two is the fact that Emperor Charles summoned the Austrian Parliament to meet early in 1917. Some months previously he had formed a new Cabinet of new men, headed by the leader of the Bohemian Conservative Nobility, Count Heinrich Clam-Martinitz.

The system of war government created by Count Stuerghk can be briefly characterized. It regarded itself throughout as responsible only to the Emperor. Circumstantial justification for such a view lay in the conditions prevailing in Parliament since the 1911 elections. Obstruction, as practised by every national party in turn, had put its mechanism completely out of action. Since 1908, indeed,

chaos had prevailed, not only in the great Diets of Prague and Lemberg, but in the smaller assemblies of the southern Provinces. Count Stuerghk had always been an open opponent of universal suffrage. The result seemed to confirm his apprehensions. With unmistakable, if painful satisfaction, therefore, and the sense that political facts fully justified his policy, he resorted to the "dictatorship paragraph" to support ministerial absolutism.

When the Reichsrat was prorogued, early in 1914, as the result of a fresh outburst of obstruction on the part of the Czech National Socialists, deputies of all parties felt that a long parliamentary holiday was before them, and that great events would probably take place before they met again. The German parties were known to approve fully of Count Stuerghk's dictatorship; they saw no hope of any lasting improvement in internal conditions save through the declaration by the Crown of a "compromise" in Bohemia, based upon a territorial delimitation of Czech and German areas. Nowhere more sensibly than in Austria were there felt the reactions in general European complications, and those consequences for the grouping of the Powers which were to result from the Balkan wars, the London Conference, and the Peace of Bucharest. Conditions in the Reichsrat and speeches and resolutions by Czech and South Slav National parties directly reflected the effects of the rise to power in the Balkan peninsula of an aggressive Serbia. While feeling that so long as Francis Joseph lived no new edifice could be expected to rise on the ruins of Austrian internal policy, every party and people believed that great events in Austria and in Hungary might be counted on when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand came to the throne. There was a universal feeling of being in the antechamber of such events. When, in April 1914, Emperor Francis Joseph fell dangerously ill, this mood rose to a pitch of painful tension before the news of his recovery was published. Count Stuerghk regarded himself as, in all probability, the old Emperor's last Prime Minister. As he later put it, he felt it his duty to give him peace and quiet within the Empire in his closing days, and to spare him any sort of innovation. To this conception of his historic rôle Count Stuerghk adhered, even after the crime of Sarajevo had led to war with Serbia and had developed with frightful rapidity into a world war. His attitude to the ultimatum to Serbia is known from the subsequently published protocols of the meetings of the Crown Council held in

July 1914. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to regard him as an enthusiastic supporter of the War. In these decisive moments he was doubtless dominated by the old Austrian tradition, to which Francis Joseph had energetically adhered throughout his long reign, the tradition which ruled that war once declared an Austrian Government must meet every demand of the Supreme Command with all the resources in its power, and that thenceforward the life of the State should be viewed only from the military standpoint.

Therefore it seemed self-evident to Count Stuerghk that from the moment of the outbreak of war the entire mechanism of government and administration should, without let or hindrance, be placed at the exclusive disposal of the Supreme Command. Personally he regretted that the Emperor, owing to his great age, could not in person wield the historic authority of the "Supreme War Lord." The Archduke Friedrich was formally named as Commander; but his tenure was symbolic only; actual power was held and wielded by the Chief of the General Staff, General Conrad von Hoetzendorf and the Supreme Command composed of his General Staff officers. If those who claimed to be intimate in Court affairs at this period are to be believed, Count Stuerghk's regrets were shared by the Emperor himself, who frequently deplored the fact that his age compelled him practically to divest himself of the rights of majesty and assign them to the Commander-in-Chief. He consoled himself with the military view that a monarch who cannot lead his armies in the field cannot exercise supremacy in time of war. Nor was this all. Count Stuerghk had always been an admirer of the political intelligence and force of Count Stephen Tisza. Moreover, though a member of the German Liberal wing of the party of landed proprietors, sharing the views of his class, he had even in war to recognize unreservedly the hegemony in all common concerns which Hungary had acquired since 1867. This fact, a main cause of the political decomposition of Austria in recent decades, was to produce appalling results in war time. It involved, first and foremost, the most disastrous economic consequences, above all to Austria's food supply. This forced itself soon enough upon the attention of the bureaucracy; nor was it hidden from Count Stuerghk himself. They saw, but they could do nothing. The Compromise of 1867 had set up a Customs Union, a common economic unit. For the principle behind it, every older Austrian statesman had fought; after a bitter



struggle with Kossuthism, it had been maintained intact. Now in the first days of war, it was entirely lost. Hungary at once separated itself so completely from Austria that Vienna had to regard it as a foreign country. For decades, the Austrian bureaucracy had been penning and despatching to Budapest a stream of notes and memoranda on the maintenance of economic unity. They had, now, to look helplessly on and to see the Government compelled by Count Tisza and, in part, by the Supreme Command, abandon its obligation to feed the people. Count Stuergh's personal view of the subordination of the Civil Government to the dictatorial supremacy of the Supreme Command was naturally shared by the entire Cabinet over which he presided. Of course, there were differences of opinion as to the degree to which the Civil Government should abdicate in favor of the military. There was incessant friction between the local authorities and the Government on the one hand, and the territorial military chiefs and the Supreme Command on the other. Moreover, the Ministries and the civil service authorities endeavored within the limit of their powers, though not often successfully, to mitigate the extreme harshness of the demands of the army leaders and their inroads on freedom. As the War went on, the position of the civilian authorities became more and more difficult, especially in those parts of the country where the non-German people were increasingly opposed to the War. This opposition might not be obvious on the surface; it was, however, patent enough and felt painfully enough in Vienna and in the army, notably when whole divisions of Slav troops began to go over to the enemy. This happened in Galicia, where the Ruthenians were frequently proved to have understandings with the Russians, and, even more frequently, were charged, without proof, with having them; it was also the case in the Sudetic, South Slav, and Italian territories. Everywhere, the subordination of government to the army tended to weaken the authority of the civil power and to reduce its influence. It must be remembered that before the War, the spirit of modern militarism was altogether alien to every class in Austria. This was true even of the Germans of the Alps, tried of old as they were in the defense of their homeland and fighters by tradition. They were to prove the most heroic and self-sacrificing defenders of the country, first in the northern theater, and then on the Italian front, where the old defense organization of the Tyrol and Carinthia finally put every man of the peasant



population, from boys to greybeards, at the disposal of the army. Even among them, however, widespread disaffection and cases of individual conflict were caused by the utter ruthlessness of the military dictatorship and its lamentable lack of any grasp of popular psychology. Both in its dealing with the people, and in its political efforts to protect the army from treachery at home—a task that occupied them more and more—its failure was innate. In regions like Eastern Galicia, Carniola, and other Slovene territories, as well as in Italian districts, where the Supreme Command denounced the clergy and the educated classes among the non-Germans for unpatriotic behavior and for understandings with the enemy, a deep aversion to the War and, at the same time, to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and to the Austrian State grew up among the mass of the peasantry. The civil authorities were helpless to control the policy of those holding military power, even when the attempt was made by officials familiar with the real conditions. The General Staff would not adopt a more tactful course and they naturally lost by it accordingly. Even Count Stuerghk was perturbed and took the view that the Draconian methods of the military commanders and their subordinates injured the interests of the Dynasty and the State more than, at the most optimistic reckoning, they could help the cause of military security. When the Supreme Command, without consulting the Prime Minister, arrested Dr. Karel Kramarz, a deputy, and the most respected leader of the Czech nation at the time, Count Stuerghk went to the aged Emperor in person and complained in the most bitter terms of the evils and dangers caused by this practical dictatorship, without success however. Even in political matters, the authority of the army must not be interfered with or diminished! In the end, Count Stuerghk himself would have had to admit that the main blame for the complete helplessness, ever since the beginning of the War, of the Government and the civil authorities generally, as opposed to the military, lay in his own previous attitude—his rigid absolutism, and his obstinate refusal to allow Parliament to meet even subject to the restrictions under which it was working in Hungary.

The relations that developed within the first few days and weeks of the War, between the civil power and the military authorities in Austria, were, despite the pressure of an extremely severe press censorship, not wholly unknown to the people. The trouble went

on throughout the administration; civil servants, communal councils, and the different professional and industrial groups among the people were in continual conflict with the military of different grades in the war zone and behind it. Few, however, were in a position to know how far opposition between Government and Supreme Command had actually gone in the first two years of the War. That knowledge was confined to persons who, for one reason or another, were actually in touch with what was going on. Possibly at some later date, the papers of officials and officers and the memoranda of the responsible heads of the military and civil administration may give a full insight into the unhappy relations between the Viennese Government and the command in the field. As it is, owing to the publication by the Governments of the Succession States of papers belonging to the late Supreme Command issued in the Czech press, we possess a series of remarkable official documents and reports from the Austrian Supreme Command to the Emperor Francis Joseph, covering the years 1914 and 1915. These documents show that, from the very beginning of the War, the Supreme Command, nominally represented by the Archduke Frederick, but in point of fact wholly in the hands of the Chief of the General Staff, General Conrad von Hoetzendorf, carried on a methodical campaign, first against the Stuerghk Government, and then against the actual conditions of government, administration, and justice in Austria. The General Staff did not stop at this; it endeavored by direct representations and the production of concrete plans based upon them, to bring about with all possible celerity a complete change in the internal institutions of the country. The primary object of these domestic efforts of the Supreme Command and the General Staff was to extend, above all to Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, the system already applied to the Galician war area and the adjacent districts. There, the Imperial Decree of July 25, 1914, had transferred the powers of civil government and all the administrative functions of the Governor to the military commander, and had substituted military for civil law. After the opening of the Italian campaign, the Supreme Command endeavored to get this system extended to great areas of the Alpine country. In the last year of the War, they went even farther and tried to bring about the appointment of a general in high command, and endowed with special powers to control Vienna and the whole of the area of the State not directly in

contact with the war zone. During the winters of 1914 and 1915 the General Staff in the northern and northeastern war zone worked out and pressed this policy as a means, in their view essential, for securing the army in the field and protecting its war spirit from dangers in the rear. They argued that the civil power must pass completely into military hands in Crownlands where the majority of the population was Czech. The first item in their plan for the universal transformation of government and administration was that civil governors should be replaced by generals; for these generals could then be trusted to put into a reform of the administrative system the energy adequate to ensure a speedy harvest in the shape of a revived patriotic spirit among populations at present opposed to the War. One success the General Staff did finally achieve in its policy; a general was appointed governor of the two provinces that had to all intents and purposes become part of the war zone, Galicia and Bukovina. But the urgent demand of General Headquarters in February 1915, to have a military governor appointed for Bohemia, coupled with the nomination for that post of the chief of the command in the rear of the northern army, Field Marshal Lieutenant Kanik, was refused by the Monarch.

He also rejected subsequent proposals for the militarization of the Alpine regions. The whole of the correspondence containing the demands of the Austrian General Staff for the militarization of the administration, if possible throughout the realm, is couched in very emphatic language, which rises to acerbity in its criticism of State administration as conducted by the civil and judicial authorities. A note from the Supreme Command of November 26, 1914, addressed to the Prime Minister, complains bitterly of Pan-Slavic and anti-Austrian tendencies in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, and a conviction is expressed that the existing state of things is partly due to the dilatory course of procedure before the courts in cases of high treason, or offenses against the armed forces of the Crown. "It would certainly be most desirable for the administration in the areas in question to aim at an efficient handling of such matters as the action of the State police, the police regulation of meetings and the press, the inspection of postal matter, and the supervision of public bodies, especially of the communal councils." At the same time, the Supreme Command addressed to the Emperor a plea that "in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, military jurisdiction should be placed under its



supervision and instructions should be given for the introduction of field court martial procedure, as also in all cases where civilians were involved, in the military courts." Although the Emperor rejected this request, it was soon pressed upon him again, on the ground cited in the document from which quotation has already been made, that "the State authorities have shown a suspicious weakness in face of the treasonable movement in the Kingdom of Bohemia." These documents prove that the failure of the plans of the Austrian General Staff for a complete militarization of government, administration, and justice throughout the whole country was, in the end, due to the personal resistance of the aged Emperor. No doubt Count Stuerghk, who was well aware of the dangers of the efforts of the army leaders to get control of internal administration, and understood their policy pretty thoroughly, did his utmost to support the Emperor in this.

Count Stuerghk, however, never saw that these very efforts on the part of the army's commanders, and the way they employed their extensive administrative powers in the areas where the army halted, were, in fact, the strongest levers for bringing about that alienation of all the peoples from the Austrian State which followed the conclusion of the War; still less that this senseless policy itself was an inevitable consequence of the peculiar character of Austrian civil government and of its attitude since the outbreak of war. The efforts of the Supreme Command to militarize the entire civil and criminal administration can only be understood by keeping in mind the conflict, latent throughout decades, between military power and constitutional government in Austria. These efforts would have been impossible if, from the very beginning of the War, the Stuerghk Government had not of its own free will completely renounced the character and position of a real government, which as the supreme agency of the State, even in war time, is the responsible director of policy, internal and external.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The opposition between high commanders and the Government which, before the War, was scarcely visible on the surface, could in the last analysis be referred to the personality of the Emperor Francis Joseph himself. In his heart of hearts he was always an anti-constitutionalist, and, at the last, could be brought to accept the constitutional régime for Austria, forced upon him in 1867, only because he was convinced that in "his army," that is to say, in his generals and officer corps, he possessed a last and sure support in carrying out his own will as ruler if it should come to the test. The politi-



In this connection the unhappy dualist organization of the Habsburg Empire had a most disastrous effect. In the first place, it meant that both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of War, being organs of the common government of the Monarchy as a whole, were removed, constitutionally, from any responsibility to the representatives of the people. Further, the Delegations, sent every year from the Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments to discuss and deal with matters of common concern, for which the "unitary" government was responsible, had not met since the beginning of the War. As a consequence, the Austrian people and even the Austrian Government, the Emperor's official Ministry, was cut off from any direct coöperation with the common government, in the hands of which lay the direction of foreign policy, even in war time, and the conduct of the War. The Emperor was, according to the Austrian constitution, "Supreme War Lord," invested with the personal and responsible direction of the army in war and peace. In so far, however, as he had handed over the command in the field to another, he had himself, according to his own conception, made the use of his

cal ideas of the heads of the army—and, for that matter, at the beginning of the War, of the majority of professional soldiers—represented, more or less, the older "pre-March" political ideology of Francis Joseph himself. Fifty years of constitutionalism in Austria in his case concealed the absolutist kernel, and, in some instances modified its substance, mainly because Francis Joseph had learned how to manipulate the forms of the constitutionalism that had been set up in Austria as in Germany, while keeping his imperial authority intact. Unfortunately, his generals had had no such schooling; he himself preferred them to think, as in fact they did, along the lines of his own mental attitude as a young monarch and war lord; indeed such was his own attitude now and so he found the constitutional ruler's garb, which he had to wear in Austria, not too uncomfortable. Throughout the constitutional epoch his generals looked on in silent disapproval while the constitutional monarch appointed and kept in office governments which they regarded as bad and weak, because they attempted to govern in accordance with the constitution, took cognizance in certain directions of public opinion, and recognized the existence of different nationalities in Austria and their collective and individual basic citizen rights. When war came and, as the Commander-in-Chief put it in his addresses to the Emperor himself, the existence of the Monarchy was at stake, they honestly expressed to the Monarch and Supreme War Lord their inmost political conviction. To do so seemed to them an absolute military necessity—the winning of the War depended on it—and, being old Austrians, any sort of civil government on a constitutional footing seemed to them senseless and dangerous in time of war.

supreme prerogative impossible. Nevertheless, in the end, the repeated and difficult conflicts between the General Staff and the Commander-in-Chief on the one hand, and the Austrian and the Hungarian Governments on the other, like all the searching questions perpetually being thrown up by the military alliance with Germany, had to come to the Monarch for his personal decision. His military entourage was then bound to have its influence; yet the determined "advice" of these men was in most cases simply the peremptory and explicit will of the army and of the Chief of the General Staff. Within a very short time it was apparent that that mechanism of the common government, extraordinarily complicated even in peace time, which Francis Joseph had created in 1867 and with which he had ruled alone for fifty years, had had its foundation shattered and undermined. At the very moment when for the first time the machine was brought to trial, under the comprehensive and awful pressure of a world war against fearful odds, Francis Joseph who had created this essentially fragile and artificial structure and molded it to the expression of his own individuality, was no longer physically capable of directing it himself.

The disastrous results of the disintegration of the dual government, as they were brought about by the army and by the control of foreign policy, were naturally felt in Austria, and by the Austrian Government. For in Austria very soon after the outbreak of war, the sum of supreme power in the realm was in the hands of the Supreme Command, *i.e.*, practically in those of the Chief of the General Staff and his assistants; while the Hungarian Government, within its own territory, was, as in peace times, completely independent of Vienna, that is, of the Monarch and the common government. Internal policy and administration were covered by the Hungarian Parliament, in continuous session. Thanks to this, the Hungarian Government maintained an undiminished influence as opposed to the Supreme Command, to any incursion by the military leaders into the political sphere, and also to any diplomatic action on the part of the dual government. In case of need, it could vigorously repel any measures on the part of the army with which it did not agree or which it regarded as encroachments. The Austrian Government, on the other hand, formed by Count Stuerghk exclusively from officials selected according to his own good pleasure, had no power to compel attention to its wishes, whether in relation

to Hungary, to war diplomacy, to the conduct of the War, or to the actions of the army chiefs in the hinterland. It could not even bring it about that the political aims prescribed for such a state as Austria, by the fact that it was composed of many different nationalities, were followed or even faced.

In fact, war government, under Count Stuergh, presented the singular picture of a State of thirty million inhabitants whose administration was, so to speak "denaturalized." A number of high officials had been called to be Ministers of the Crown. All but two of them were of purely German nationality. In the midst of a world war they were called upon to "govern" a realm composed of an amalgam of different races, in bitter political opposition to one another; and yet they were powerless to affect the distribution of political force within that realm except by police regimentation, or, at best, in given cases by personal arrangements with individual deputies made behind the closed doors of some government office. Even had he the will or the skill, no minister in this Government could have practised statesmanship, in the modern sense, by influencing the views and feelings of the different peoples and social classes in the State through the force of his own personality and so molding war policy, in the widest sense, in one direction or another. The thing was impossible. At a given moment, had the Austrian Government arrived at a clear conviction that Austria's war aims ought to be laid down, limited, or altered in a definite sense, or that it was absolutely indispensable, in order to spare the people and the land further suffering, or to preserve the life of the State itself, definitely to bring the War to an end, even in that case, granted the actual institutions of the Habsburg realm and the traditional unwritten, but none the less sacrosanct principles of distribution of power that had always governed it, they would not have had the remotest chance of making their views prevail. In this hypothetical and hardly conceivable case, a ministry animated by such a conviction could only have resigned, in order to clear itself of responsibility, and perhaps, in the end, to move public opinion to share its conviction.

A vivid appreciation of the monstrosity of such a government at such a time, in the midst of a world war which Austria Hungary had itself unleashed, is given by a comparison with other belligerent States. In no one of them, not even in monarchical, nay, absolutist



Germany under William II, was a state of things even distantly comparable with that of Austria to be found. And yet in Austria, Count Stuergh's Ministry, all the leading men in the bureaucracy, and every general in high command, regarded such a state of things as the only possible one for Austria. And this was not only because it corresponded with the traditional idea of war and its dictatorial supersession of all independent factors in the life of the State; any other method of war government in Austria was regarded as absurd, impossible, suicidal. This conclusion at any rate demonstrates how empty a pretense was all the paraphernalia of Constitutionalism and the rights of the subject peoples to a share in legislation and in government, so solemnly established in Austria. It demonstrates, further, how deeply distrust of the governed was implanted in the minds and tempers of the rulers of all these lands and races. For them indeed distrust seemed to be the fundamental and immutable principle of State wisdom. Moreover, this principle was, from the very beginning of the War, almost unanimously accepted and approved by the parliamentary representatives, the party leaders, and the press of the whole of the middle and peasant classes of German Austria, a fact which was bound to confirm the Government's "patriarchal" conception of its own rights and duties, and justify the attitude of modest renunciation which it assumed toward Hungary, the army, and the common government.

Calamitous reactions followed from the character of the War Government and its attitude to the governed. While readily subordinating itself in all dual or imperial questions of war policy to the Government of Count Tisza, the Stuergh Government, no less than the Hungarian, presented to the entire world its official view that the War was a struggle for German and Magyar supremacy. In Austria, the Reichsrat, with the agreement of the Germans, remained closed; in Hungary, by adhering rigidly to a limited franchise, and a highly oligarchic organization of Parliament itself, the Government kept all non-Magyar elements from any share in public life and continued without any abatement the obstinately repressive policy of its predecessors against the South Slavs in Croatia. It was this attitude of the war governments on both sides of the Leitha, that filled the masses of Czechs and Slovenes, South Slavs, and Rumanians with bitterness and despair. This, and a conviction that the existing distribution of power could not be changed



by constitutional means, caused the active political leaders of these races, and ultimately the bulk of the people, to abandon all hope of a better future for the minority nationalities in the Habsburg Monarchy, even in the event of victory for the Central Powers. Thus an apocalyptic element, so to speak, entered into the world situation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its ruler. The conditions were prepared for a potent and overwhelming development of enemy propaganda directed against internal political conditions in Austria and Hungary. It was an Austrian war government, presenting the external appearance of complete detachment from every form of national or class politics, which, without knowing what it was doing, tilled the soil in which these enemy seeds would grow and ripen. The first impulse and the chief moral encouragement was given by the emigration of leading men among the Czechs and South Slavs. This was the initial act of pressure that led to the crystallization of forces working for the destruction of the historic union of the various Austrian nationalities now struggling for independence.

Progressive self-revelation by the Austrian War Government,—this, and this alone—gave rise to a sense of despair among the intellectual classes of the non-German peoples, which, spreading through the population, found expression in the mass desertion of Slav divisions from the army in the field. It is impossible to exaggerate the effect produced on the public mind by the arrest and harrying of Slovene and Croat deputies, followed, as it was, by a similar persecution of numerous Italian deputies, against whom no treasonable action was ever proved. To crown this came the arrest, persecution, and subsequent condemnation to death of Dr. Kramarz, and Dr. Rašin, deputies to the Reichsrat, who were leading representatives of Czech opposition to the war policy, and the arrest of numerous other national Socialist deputies and political leaders among both the Czechs and the Ruthenians. All this occurred early in 1915; and the most rigid censorship could not prevent it from becoming known throughout the realm. Its results cannot have been foreseen either by the responsible Supreme Command, or by the passive Stuerghk Government.

Anyone who tried to put such considerations before members of the Government or their parliamentary allies among the German deputies, was sure to be brushed brusquely aside as, at best, a head-in-the-clouds “idealist,” or a “defeatist.” Yet it was not open to

doubt that a policy of enlisting the coöperation of all the peoples of Austria in the controlling activity of a parliament—even if, as in Germany, this activity was strictly limited—would, despite the strife of nationalities, have united them all, even the Slavs, in an effort for the preservation of Austria; would have roused them to the defense of the southeastern frontier, and would thus have provided a far more effective bulwark for the principle of unity than could have been achieved by a war government with a war policy based on the wholesale confiscation of their constitutional rights.

Those who pinned their faith to military victory and the crude power of force failed to understand that the outcome of the War must have a political meaning; that the answer to the question involved in it—whether Austria, as a State, could continue to exist—depended, in a country so torn and distracted by racial strife, less on the balance of military power than upon the deeper forces in the minds and hearts of the people; and this was truer of Austria than of any other belligerent State except Russia.

The fateful character of the Stuergh War Ministry is therefore abundantly clear. From the moment of the formation of the alliance, and the common entry of Austria and Germany into the War, the Monarchy in its foreign policy had to renounce anything like an Austro-Hungarian point of view in its diplomatic conduct of the War; and, apart from the well-intentioned but belated efforts of Emperor Charles, it was altogether subordinated to the purely militarist conceptions of German Headquarters. Thus, one result of the character of Austrian war government down to the death of Francis Joseph, was that the men responsible for Austria's military, political, and administrative activities saw no hope of maintaining intact the union of different lands and peoples comprising the Austrian State save through a decisive victory under German leadership. Although nearly all of them would have rejected the idea that the Habsburg Monarchy had neither claim to, nor prospect of, continued existence as a great Power, or even as an imperial federation of States, their actions nevertheless were such as could only in reason have proceeded from an unalterable conviction that there was no possibility of maintaining Austria-Hungary as an international unity by its reconstruction on a new basis, such as would secure to the non-Magyar and non-German races a definite measure of their nationalist aspirations within a federal State. It can therefore be

said that during the War, the Habsburg Empire was given up by its own statesmen, except in the event of a German victory in the field. This, of course, was not true of the political rulers of Hungary, with Count Tisza at their head. They never admitted for one moment that the loss of the War might carry with it a dissolution of the great Magyar national State which had grown up since 1867. The Austrian Government passed a self-denying ordinance when it went to war. If from that hour it was cut off from any kind of positive political action, the reason lay, in the last analysis, not so much in the working of the dualist system, or in the unbroken tradition of willing submission to the Monarch and his Court or military entourage, as in its one essential mode of thought. This mode of thought was embodied, with an almost classic perfection, in the personality of Count Stuerghk—so much so, indeed, that he may be called a man of destiny. Under him, the Government was, consciously and absolutely, passive. In its own view, there was nothing left for it to do, beyond the conscientious carrying out of the daily administrative routine.

## CHAPTER V

### WAR-TIME ADMINISTRATION

FROM the very outset, the Stuerghk Government, as we have seen, besides carrying through the long-prepared measures designed to support the War, had to meet a series of difficult legislative tasks. Since Parliament was not to convene, the Cabinet had to promulgate, in the form of Imperial Decrees based on the "dictatorship paragraph," the exceptional measures which had been foreseen as necessary for the conduct of the War and the resulting alterations in and additions to existing laws. Statistics laid before the Reichsrat in 1917 show that between March 16, 1914 and May 30, 1917, no less than 181 Imperial Decrees were put forth. A few were issued before the War and many were modified during its course by other supplementary Decrees based on the "dictatorship paragraph."

These Decrees, as extensive as they were elastic, profoundly altered Austrian legislation. Within these new limits the Government had now to carry on the administration and to grapple with the vast problems created by the War in all State departments and in every condition of life.

What was done administratively, and through the issue of regulations by the different Ministries and by the Government as a whole was set forth by the latter in an official publication, "Report on the War Measures of the Imperial and Royal Government." Four volumes of this Report have been issued, the last appearing on March 12, 1918; and they cover the period from the beginning of the War down to July 1, 1917. Preparation or publication of further parts was prevented by the Revolution. The contents of these volumes provide a survey of the scope of Austrian war administration and the vast variety of tasks and duties with which it was constantly occupied. The huge mass of material is arranged under the following heads:

1. Agriculture and Food Supply.
2. Trade, Industry, Commerce, and Mining.
3. Railways, Shipping, Posts, and Telegraphs.
4. Credit and Public Finance.
5. Education.



## 6. Law.

## 7. General Public Welfare Provisions.

Each volume further contains graphs, statistical material, and instructive appendices. Within the general divisions there are further sub-divisions, showing the special circumstances and specific needs dealt with by regulation and administration. The range of problems and the steps taken to meet them enable one to see, in an extraordinary mosaic, the complex and manifold effects of modern war on the entire social life of a highly civilized people. With little to help it but its own experience and observation, and that of its subordinate authorities, the Austrian Government had to cope with all this, and try to forestall its gravest effects.

Owing to the absurd cautiousness with which the censorship of the entire press was almost invariably conducted, public opinion could afford no support to the Government in its administrative policy. Meetings and associations were confined within the narrowest possible limits; everywhere the meetings of communal bodies were carried on behind closed doors. In the capital they were confined to delegate conferences of the leaders of municipal groups and parties. Thus, in the preparation of the Decrees and general regulations designed to deal with the economic difficulties and new social problems daily presented by the War, the Government had here to rely for information upon what it could glean from the reports and appeals of Provincial and district bureaus, of magistrates and mayors, and of the police. An immense field was open to the bureaucracy in control of Austrian government, administration, and legislation, for the exercise of the principles and practices developed throughout two centuries in leading and caring for the entire population and watching patriarchally over its varying interests. And despite the very severe criticisms passed on Austrian administration at all times—and during the War, often undoubtedly deserved—it must be admitted that, subject to the limitations set by war-time conditions, much good service was rendered. The old faults and evils remained—lack of energy and of constructive ideas, excessive formalism and consequent circumlocution and delay, and a pettifogging preoccupation with purely juristic matters—all alike aggravated by the obscurity of the relation between the State administration and that of the autonomous bodies in the matter of the functions and activities of the various authorities involved. These and other

causes of constant friction within the actual machine lessened its practical efficiency, and again and again made themselves painfully felt. Moreover, as many officials of the junior and middle grades of the civil service had been called to the front, there was often a lack of competent men for given tasks. At the same time, a salutary counteracting force to an excessive caution, which in the Austrian official often amounted to a dread of responsibility, was provided by the powerful impetus of the War itself. On the whole, the mighty and indeed overwhelming tasks which the War threw upon such civil service employees were energetically taken hold of and, as far as possible, met. Thousands of Austrian civil servants throughout this fearful time upheld the old tradition of duty, the iron diligence, the sheer efficiency, and the practised skill of former days. One most unhappy trait, however, spread from the military administration to the civil service. This was the lighthearted readiness with which the enormous demands made on the State finances were granted. An easy latitude in finance was a military formula that, at the very beginning of the War, was passed on to the regular authorities. Their watchword was "In war one must not think of money!" It was only too evident, even in the first year, that this program was being more and more readily accepted on the civil side also. Grants of immense sums for sanitary services and hospitals—very backward, it is true, in many cases—were lightly passed by the Government and swiftly expended by executives. Uncounted millions were swallowed up by the enormous and wholly new tasks laid upon the administration by the War, such as the care of prisoners of war and the erection of extensive detention camps both for them and for the internes and fugitives from the areas occupied by the enemy, whose numbers soon ran into hundreds of thousands. The very fact of disbursing such huge sums obliterated the last traces of the old carefulness with public money which had formerly characterized the Austrian civil service, or the parsimony and over-exactitude in financial matters for which it had often been unjustly blamed. Practical competence and efficiency, however, were displayed in no mean measure; after many blunders at the beginning of the War, the task of conveying a hundred thousand Galician refugees to Bohemia and Moravia was carried through successfully; and, within the first two years, a really imposing hospital organization was created in all the Crownlands. On the railways, moreover, existing lines were added

to and new lines opened, to the betterment of the system of Austrian State railways which, at the outbreak of war, had managed to cope with the vast demands of mobilization only by putting extreme pressure on the capacity of both lines and personnel. But the first place on the diversified agenda of war-time State administration was occupied by the huge task, growing month to month, of feeding the people. This, with the State's organization of all agricultural and industrial production for provisioning the armies and supplying them with necessary material, and its development of that into a complete State supervision and organization of commerce and production may be left for a subsequent chapter.

In so far as Austria's War Government occupied itself exclusively with administration and consequently lost touch more and more with social and political forces among the people, to all intents and purposes it abandoned the most important duty of a modern State—that of understanding the movement of opinion and, through the confidence which the State can command,—influencing it and bringing the aspirations of the masses into line with the interests of the whole community and of the State itself. Neglecting this, it lost any possibility of leading and directing the great majority of the people. Here the activity of the Government as a whole, as of the separate ministerial departments, was confined to an incessant iteration of the patriotic duty of the individual and of the various professional and industrial classes to support the army in the field with every moral and material resource, and, first of all, to care for the families of the reservists and territorials called to the colors, the dependents of the fallen and the wounded, in a word, for all who were suffering as the direct result of the War. From the beginning, military organization under these heads was fully and energetically supported by the civil government and administration, and here there was no attempt to adhere to older bureaucratic methods. On the contrary, appeals were made very early for voluntary assistance and coöperation.

One of the few comforting pages in the history of this tragic period is that which records the response to this appeal. Both in Vienna and in the larger cities voluntary bodies organized to meet these new demands, and did it at times with astonishing success. Thanks to the selfless devotion of thousands, notably the women of all classes, communal kitchens, canteens, crèches, convalescent homes,



etc., were opened and met needs which were growing day by day more pitiful. Another department, in which a hitherto entirely unknown coöperation developed between government, voluntary organizations, and the people themselves, appeared with the issuing of war loans and the campaigns for subscriptions to them. A new mechanism was created and given the very widest extension, by an alliance of the Government and its subordinate authorities with all sorts of public and private associations, *e.g.*, communal councils, chambers of commerce, public and private insurance companies, savings bank associations, trade unions, and above all with the banks. In this connection, of course, the services of the press were widely employed. Here, too, the efforts of the Austrian and Hungarian Governments were powerfully supported among the German and Magyar upper and middle classes by the independent efforts of numerous individuals impelled by a lively conviction that the War was inevitable, just, and necessary, and must be fought to a victorious end. After the first two war loans a highly elaborate mechanism for propaganda and agitation was created. Thanks to this, each fresh issue, down to the first loan of 1918, yielded more and more imposing totals—totals which, unfortunately, were also evidence of an inflation of currency which was producing the most serious social and economic results. In Vienna and Budapest the Government's influence worked through the great central banks, and through them made use of all industrial companies and enterprises connected with the banks; in the same way, governors and local governments in the provincial towns influenced local credit institutions, savings banks, and associations of all kinds, as well as the propertied classes directly. The work was then carried a stage further by the district and local financial officers, and so reached the peasants and the lesser middle class. Educational authorities and even teachers were pressed into the service, and compelled to use their professional influence to popularize these war loans. It was not to be expected, in all this, that the proper line between the authority of the administrative officer and his function as driver would always be preserved. Where resistance was met with, as, for example, in Bohemia and Moravia and in the South Slav areas, and the appeals were felt to be a form of compulsion, the result not infrequently was a lowering of the hitherto high status of the departments and their officials. In the non-German areas, German officials



began to be looked upon as foreign elements in the social body, and so lost their hold completely.

Here we come upon one of the factors which was to cause a progressive loss in the efficiency and authority of the Government, as the War went on. We will need to refer to it again, when we come to deal with the economic administration, which, when the War had been going on for a month or more became the primary preoccupation of the Government, and the test of its efficiency. Measured and judged by that standard on the basis of what it did and what it did not do as the economic director in time of war to provide the masses with the necessities of life, it was, though not always with absolute justice, condemned by the people as a whole.

## CHAPTER VI

### WAR ECONOMICS

WAR presented to the Austrian Government two huge tasks. The first, the establishment of civil dictatorship over the entire area of public life, has already been described. The system had been thoroughly prepared for in advance, and, on mobilization, was carried through without resistance from any quarter. The second task, common to every war government, was the building up of a wholly new form of economic organism, one capable of supporting the needs of the army—in Austria-Hungary a conscript army and one of millions. All wars impose certain economic tasks on peoples and governments, but no previous war afforded any real parallel to this. The fact that on both sides the contest was waged not by professional armies but by whole nations in arms, and in arms for a life and death struggle, presented governments with problems gigantic and entirely new. As the first examples of the use of modern weapons and modern technique, the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, despite the limitation both of the field and of the numbers engaged, had given some indication of the reaction of the modern army upon the economic life of the nation behind it. The term "war economics" had, in fact, been coined by Austrian and German economists to describe the phenomena, new to economic science, created by modern war. The expression suggests that on the outbreak of war between national armies equipped with modern weapons, the entire economic organization of the contending parties must be wholly and solely devoted to the single purpose of war. More than two decades before the World War, pacifist writers had attempted to visualize the appalling vastness of the economic problems that must be raised by a world war involving five continents. The ideas expressed by von Bloch, the Russian economist and pacifist, are said to have determined Czar Nicholas II to launch his Hague project for world peace. In the summer of 1914, when within a few days Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia and Serbia, France, Great Britain, and Belgium were plunged into war, its economic aspect rose up before each one of them with awful pressure, a problem so vast as almost to elude comprehension. It seemed, and indeed it was, a problem

hardly secondary to the military task itself in the difficulties it presented, in the multiplicity of questions that it raised, in the range of demands that had to be met, and in its tremendous reactions upon national life. It appeared, at once, and, as the War went on, it rose more and more menacingly in its portentous extension, as the real pivot and controlling factor both of the awful national struggle and of the actions of every government and of every commander-in-chief. The historian of the future who is concerned to give a true picture of the mighty upheaval and superhuman effort of world war, and to understand its modern, mass phenomenon, must postulate, as his center, a scientific analysis of "war economy." But in such an account as this, the economic aspect, supremely important as it is, can only be treated as a part of the general problem. A true perspective depends on a realization of the fact that one result of the blockade of Germany and Austria-Hungary and of the economic war carried on by the Entente was the economic isolation of Central Europe. International trade was swept away. The Central Powers had to be economically self-sufficient; they had to live on the food and raw materials within the relatively small area of their own territories. Nor did free trade obtain among the Allies; there, too, war needs governed everything. A system of war economy, to which history affords no analogue, came into force, all over the world. On both sides, what made governments into war governments were their economic activities, and the development within every country of that economic organization best adapted to its war-time purposes.<sup>1</sup>

The world-wide extension of the War, and the swift and vigorous pressure of the blockade of the coasts of Europe, meant that Austria had at once to face the most difficult of economic questions: that of feeding not only its armies but the whole mass of its non-combatant population. Contrary to what had hitherto been taken to be the principles of International Law, Britain, in March 1915, prohibited the direct or indirect importation of foodstuffs to the Central Powers, and made the prohibition effective. The treatment of wheat, flour, and other foodstuffs as contraband by Britain and its allies, even

<sup>1</sup> An illuminating insight into the British system is afforded by *Politics from Within, 1911-1918, Including Some Records of a Great National Effort* (London, 1924), by Dr. Christopher Addison, Minister of Munitions and, later, Minister of Health, in the Lloyd George Government.

when carried in neutral bottoms, made the blockade a true hunger blockade. The Entente justified this action on the ground that the institution of State monopolies of wheat and flour in Germany and Austria-Hungary, with State control of all foodstuffs, made it impossible to distinguish between food for civilians and food for combatants; only a general prohibition would meet the case. Thus, the State war economy of the Central Powers afforded Britain and its allies the justification adduced by them for extending the blockade.

War economy, as practised by the Austrian Government, arose from the need of securing the elementary necessities of life. Statistics of agricultural production in peace time had long established the fact that the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy must import a considerable proportion of its food supply from Hungary, and depend for other articles on supplies from abroad. When the Hungarian harvest was poor it had been compelled in pre-war years to import large quantities of rye and maize from Russia and Rumania. At a time when the very existence of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was at stake, the Hungarian Government and ruling classes might have been expected to remember the obligation of mutual assistance in time of war which had been described in the Pragmatic Sanction as being the foundation of the indissoluble unity of Hungary and the other lands of the common dynasty. Nothing of the kind. In Hungary Count Stephen Tisza was politically omnipotent. As the last and stoutest defender of the Compromise, he had for many years been regarded by the dynasty as the indispensable man. Now, under his leadership, in the supreme hour of danger, Hungary erected a prohibitive barrier against the export of grain to Austria. When Hungary required Austrian goods, then, and only then, were small consignments of food or raw materials allowed to pass through to pay for them. That was all. Although the difficulty of providing Austria's thirty millions with the barest necessities was thus greatly added to, Hungary did not yield. It maintained its barrier to the very end. Not the faintest success attended the feeble efforts of Count Stuerghk to induce the men who really controlled the destinies of the common Empire to raise the blockade they had set up against Austria. How could he hope to succeed? The Austrian Premier was the creature of the monarch's will. He was head of a government which, before the War, had dismissed Parliament and every provincial assembly and, when war broke out, had rejected with scorn



the notion of calling them together. What possible hold could he have over, or hope from, the Hungarian Premier, who from the first day of the War to the last kept the Hungarian Reichstag in session, and the rights of Magyar citizens, of the noble and upper classes, intact against military absolutism? From the day of mobilization the voice of the people was silent in Austria. The Diets and Reichsrat were closed. The press was under the most rigid censorship. The Government, formally responsible to the Emperor, was in its own view a passive, silent, and dutiful instrument of General Headquarters. Speech was confined to Hungary and the Hungarian Government; in other words, to the Magyar privileged class. Only now and then did opposition in the Reichstag break through the restraints imposed by Count Tisza, who regarded himself, with a sort of somber megalomania, as at once the embodiment of Hungary and its Providence.

Weakened by its purely absolutist Government, Austria was further hampered in its political relations both to its German ally and to Hungary, by the complete economic isolation thus forced upon it by Tisza. From the beginning, its war economy had to be organized on the highly insecure basis of Austria alone, and an Austria deprived, after the Russian invasion and devastation of Galicia and Bukovina in August 1914, of one of its most productive areas. The Stuerghk Government, therefore, had no choice. In 1914-1915 State food control had to be instituted. With it, we are in touch with the basic idea of Austrian and German war economy. In both countries, the bureaucrats and soldiers who monopolized the "State" had been trained in a common school, shared common ideas on social economics, finance, and the conduct of war, and naturally had developed a common economic method. The absolute necessity of "holding out," which was the watchword of German Headquarters, became, with its whole train of associated ideas, the guiding formula with Austrian statesmen and authorities. They had no power to resist it. From the beginning the Austrian Supreme Command was in fact and, later, in form subordinate to the German. It was, moreover, soon patent to everyone in Austria that the Viennese Government and, above all, the Foreign Office had neither the power nor the will to carry on a policy of its own.

Both in Germany and in Austria the drive behind certain vital phases of war organization came from industry rather than from

army or bureaucracy. Walther Rathenau was responsible for the control of raw materials in Germany. In Austria, in the same way, practical men indicated the paths to be followed. The economic departments of the old bureaucracy included a number of highly gifted men of independent mind. Free from the rigid arrogance of the Prussian bureaucrat, they had a more unprejudiced judgment of foreign men and things, enjoyed a greater variety of contact, and retained a real flexibility of intellectual approach.

The first great branch of war economy, the system of State food control, was organized almost at the same time in Germany and Austria, under the compulsion of the same need. In Austria, the first step was the abolition of the grain taxes, to which Hungary's consent was with some difficulty obtained; the way having been prepared by the embargoes on the import and export of food. Since it had always been part of the duty of the communal authorities to look after the people's food supply, they then issued decrees calling for the production of supplies available within the country, whether in the hands of producers or dealers. This procedure was strengthened by a legislative ordinance prescribing the admixture of substitutes in bread flour, a certain percentage of potato, barley, and maize being made compulsory in order to eke out the supply. Meanwhile, the disastrous results of the bad harvest of 1914 made themselves felt, both in Austria and in Hungary. Grain and meal prices soared. The Government was compelled to intervene more drastically in grain and bread production. The most important step was the fixing of maximum prices for grain, flour, and bread. This form of protection for the consumer, which inevitably led to a further reduction of production, was gradually extended to all agricultural produce. Retrospectively, it is easy to see the serious and often fatal consequences of this policy of maximum prices and State rationing. True, the mass of the people got their flour and bread relatively cheap. After a time prices fell below the rising prices of the cereal world market, and even below the cost of production at home, with the result that there was less and less inducement to the home producer and a continuous decline in agricultural production in Austria-Hungary. Price-fixing was accompanied by a stream of new "economy" regulations, prescribing an ever greater mixing of substitutes in flour and bread. The final step was taken in the spring of 1915. When the Hungarian frontier was closed against any ex-

port of food to Austria, and the prohibition enforced with fearful thoroughness, the Viennese Government determined on the introduction of an unlimited State monopoly of the market for grain, and its milling, baking, and distribution. This monopoly is the perfect example of the special type of war economy characteristic of Austria and of Germany. A group of decrees with legislative force prohibited dealings in grain and flour, commandeered supplies, introduced bread and flour rationing and instituted bread cards. A central body, the War Grain Control Board, was set up to organize and put in practice the monopoly of grain and flour. The entire burden of this new system was cast on the administrative authorities, with which, in each Crownland, were associated branches of the new Board; while the communes were made directly responsible for its carrying out. The whole structure was completed in the year 1915, and lasted throughout the War and for many years after it was over. The distribution of necessary commodities, mainly under the head of foods, was also regulated. In general, supplies were commandeered and maximum prices fixed. Special regulations were issued for meal, and forbade its being fed to cattle. Certain fixed percentages of cereals were allowed to be retained by the farmer himself; and the population, from now on, was divided into two classes, the self-suppliers, and the rationed.

The organization of the War Grain Control Board was the first and, at the same time, a typical instance of the way in which the old Austrian bureaucracy strove to cope with the enormous burden cast upon them by the War. Whether one looks at the scale on which this Board was organized, or at the difficulties it had to meet, it is no mean achievement. As the War went on, the blockade became more and more effective. Agricultural production declined. Serious political friction arose in connection with harvesting. Through four years of life and death struggle, the bureaucracy grappled with the task; if they failed of success, it was not for lack of care or foresight, but because the task was inherently impossible. Certainly they were helped by the amazing patience and self-abnegation of the people, above all of the working people in towns and provincial centers. Hardly less praise is due to the middle class, suffering acutely from the growing gap between rising prices and fixed incomes of a purchasing power that grew steadily less. The final collapse was due not to any faults of administration, though such there were, but



to facts and forces it could not control. How could the armies and the people of the realm be fed from the yield of crops that dwindled every year? And how could it be otherwise when countless laborers were taken from the fields to the army, and when there was an almost total lack of fertilizers, both natural and artificial? How could bureaucracy control anti-social forces like illicit trading in bread and flour, or the widespread resistance of the agricultural producer, either because he hated the War or because illicit trading gave him larger profits? After four years of war it was impossible to cope with these problems by administrative action.<sup>2</sup>

The turning point in the history of the War Control Board was the establishment of a State monopoly of grain and flour, covering the production of grain, milling, and distribution of cereal goods on a rationed basis. The Board was an *ad hoc* legal corporation. The President was appointed by, and answerable to, the Minister of the Interior, as were his three Vice-Presidents. These, together with commissioners appointed by the various State Departments, and a number of experts nominated by the President, constituted the executive. To secure contact with the consumer, an Advisory Board was added, composed of persons supposed to have first-hand knowledge of economic conditions. Since the Board had to deal with questions of organization and finance, and also to undertake a purely business task, it was, internally, divided into two groups.

<sup>2</sup> The reason why the rationing system was less successful in Austria than in England, America, or in Germany (in the early days of the War) was in large measure psychological. Community feeling was far less developed; the unit was not one nation, but a combination of distinct and mutually hostile nations. Even within German Austria social solidarity was weak, especially in the towns where the stronger economic classes used their "pull" with ruthless egoism. Moreover, from the start, none felt much confidence in the power of the bureaucracy to handle the business of food supply. Criticism of Government is a well-established Austrian habit; State regulations were disregarded with passive inertia or abused with unscrupulous selfishness. The disregard of regulations weakened both State action and private enterprise. The authorities proved quite incapable of restraining the selfishness of socially and economically powerful sections of the community; and these sections showed no such reaction against this antisocial behavior as was displayed in other countries, and which must anywhere afford the one solid footing possible for the kind of governmental regulation that imposes sacrifice on people. Illicit trading, as a matter of fact, developed on a scale impossible to control.



The first controlled administration. Statistics of requirements and of stocks on hand were assembled and reviewed; separate sections dealt with rationing, seed distribution, the needs of industry, price policy and other budget questions, and the import of foods from Hungary and abroad. The second group covered the business side; it had sections dealing with milling, transport, army supplies, wheat, rye, flour, barley, maize, and industrial deliveries; there was an import section, a central audit section, and a section dealing with current finance. The administrative side was handled along official lines, the buying and selling along those of regular business. State compulsion was thus combined with commercial methods, since they were in close touch.

War control of grain and bread was organized on the lines of existing local government institutions, inasmuch as the unit for rationing was the commune; not, of course, the thousands of tiny country parishes, but the communal organization of the large and small towns. It had to carry the most difficult piece of administration; thanks to it, the State food system was got going, and kept going for nearly four years. The efficiency of the communes naturally showed wide variations, but that the average was pretty high is proved by the result. The task grew greater every day, but in the majority of cases the communal boards and mayors, assisted by *ad hoc* committees from their councils, carried it out smoothly enough. Although its franchise was still limited, and excessively favorable to the property owner, the communal unit had for fifty years functioned as a genuine organ of local self-government. Urban local government had developed fast both in the Alpine provinces and in Bohemia and Moravia. Inasmuch as self-government, since 1861, had been genuine in the communes, these national and party forces were bound to make themselves felt; and this was the case even in food administration. Another weakness was due to the practical exclusion, under the narrow franchise, of agricultural and industrial workers. This meant that in too many cases the interest of the mass of the consumers was not sufficiently considered.

A lay element was imported by calling in merchants to serve on the central body and on its local branches, and as grain commissioners, in each administrative district, to collect and handle supplies for milling. The Government sought in this way to bring back into contact with it all possible leaders in public life and, above all, in

trade and industry, and so to compensate for the silencing of the legislative bodies.

Viewed as a whole, the new food system of course meant an increase in the power of the bureaucracy. The bread and flour monopoly was followed by a stream of new laws and decrees covering every aspect of food supply, both military and domestic. Unfortunately, since there was no one organization dealing with food as a whole, the different ministries concerned issued contradictory or overlapping decrees, and acted without full mutual understanding. The War Grain Control Board was under the Minister of the Interior. Both the Ministry of Agriculture and that of Trade were also handling the food problem. In view of the enormous demands on the administrative staff, special departments had to be set up in both these ministries. Despite innumerable interministerial conferences, division and overlapping lasted well into the third year of the War. At last, on November 13, 1916, a Central Food Office was established; and, on January 5, 1917, a special Food Minister who was a member of the Cabinet, was put at its head. To it were transferred all relevant activities previously carried out by the Ministries of the Interior, Trade, and Agriculture; not, however, questions coming under the head of health or agricultural and industrial production.

An extension and complication of the apparatus of food control at once followed. On March 16, 1917, the Food Office issued instructions that, in provinces, districts, and communes, a special, self-contained group should be set up, and all food questions referred to it by the authorities at the moment concerned. The Provincial Economic Office was accordingly set up, under the direction of an expert official, and, though subject to the control of the Governor, possessed of a certain independence; with the Provincial Economic Officer, there were created the corresponding district and parish offices and officers. In November 1916, departments for the prevention of profiteering had been established; and, on May 6, 1917, they were incorporated by a decree of the Food Office. By decree of February 28, 1917, a special system of inspection was instituted, the realm being divided into 31 inspection districts. Finally, to connect the Food Office and the consumer, a Food Council was set up, composed of persons familiar with economic conditions, nominated by the Food Minister. Its duty was to deal with matters trans-

mitted to it by the Food Office: it might also make proposals on its own account. The Food Council worked through a number of sub-committees, and constituted a kind of special parliament for the discussion of food problems. Local Food Councils were also set up and connected more or less closely with the Economic Offices as their advisers. Thus, by the last year of the War, a mighty organization had been constructed. But, as a sort of tragic commentary on it, the food position throughout the country, and particularly in Vienna, the large cities, and the industrial areas generally, had grown worse and worse. On paper, the organization with its offices and councils was superb; but much of it never got going, while certain branches proved impracticable from the start. A complete picture of the whole, in all its aspects, is given in the two volumes of "Austrian Food Decrees," edited by Dr. Kurt Frieberger.<sup>3</sup> Only the most important points can be cursorily touched on here. A series of decrees based on the dictatorial powers of the Cabinet gave the Minister general control. The original decree of August 1, 1914, extended on various occasions, was finally superseded by that of March 21, 1917, which gave the Government the right to commandeer all supplies, imposed on every citizen the obligation of making a true return of his needs, gave the authorities power to take over stocks, regulated the scale of prices, fixed maximum prices, and laid down a series of measures for carrying this fixation and regulation into effect. Supplementary decrees were issued covering labor supply and transport. On August 14, 1914, an organization for supplying labor was created, based on the labor exchanges. For Vienna and Lower Austria, a conference of authorities with associations of employers and working men set up a special unified body for this purpose, presided over and manned by the Municipality of Vienna. Special arrangements were made for harvesting, and the existing law as to Sunday work was partially suspended. By the second year of the War, communal kitchens, which had become absolutely necessary, were organized by a special section of the Food Office. Admirable work was done in this connection by municipalities throughout Austria, and no praise is too high for the devoted service rendered here by countless men and women who gave their whole time voluntarily to the work.

The functions undertaken by the Government in connection with

<sup>3</sup> Vienna, 1917; second edition, 1919.



food control may be divided into two groups: first, the raising and harvesting of crops of all kinds and, second, the distribution of food and fodder. Under the first head fall decrees providing for an extension of the area under cultivation, the supply of fertilizers and of seed, provision for harvest and field work, and the use of fodder and hay. Under the second come all the activities connected with the War Grain Control Board, and State management of the main foodstuffs. Administration, under this second head, took the form of the rapid construction of a series of "Central" bodies, existing side by side with the State grain monopoly. Since this same process of State management, both of production and of consumption, was being organized in similar "Centrals" over the whole field of mining, industry, and commerce, it is superfluous to attempt to distinguish between the State organization set up for food and that in other departments. The working of these economic Centrals was the distinguishing achievement of war administration.

According to official publications, at the end of the War there were 91 such Centrals. Twenty concerned themselves with agriculture and agricultural production; 15 with textiles; 8 with paper and printing; 13 with chemicals, oils, and fats of all kinds; 6 with hides and leather; 13 with metals, machinery, tools, asbestos, and petroleum; 4 with stone, clays, and building; 3 with wood and cork; and 7 with trade in general. A special war organization, the Exchange Central, dealt with transactions in foreign currency. There was also a body representing the interests of organized consumers.

The Centrals may, again, be classified according to their organization. There were

- (1) thirty-four War Combines;
- (2) nineteen Centrals and Commissions (in part, State-formed Cartels), whose members were appointed by the Government from representatives of the industrial branches concerned;
- (3) fourteen Economic Boards, whose members, again, were some of them members of branches, appointed by the Government, and some of them representatives of special interests;
- (4) twenty-one War Centrals, limited liability companies, endowed with powers by the State;
- (5) the War Grain Control Board, Fodder Board, and Vegetable and Fruit Board of the Food Office, which had special positions, and were managed by government officials;



The Centrals may, again, be classified according to their activities.

(1) The Combines were State cartels, formed by decree. All undertakings using the same raw material were compulsorily made members of their respective trust. Concerns using more than one raw material belonged to more than one trust. Formed by the State, these trusts had to collect statistics upon production and consumption, the use and distribution of raw materials and semimanufactured goods. They assisted in fixing prices, advised the Centrals in giving out contracts, and coöperated in a vast number of questions of an economic character, *e.g.*, trade policy, public welfare, demobilization, and the return to peace conditions. Their work was purely administrative and they exercised no commercial functions.

(2) The Commissions, like the Combines, were called into being by decrees which prescribed their functions; unlike them, however, there was no compulsory organization of the industry in their case; they were State agencies under the standing control of the appropriate Central, and supervised the exchange of the raw materials assigned to them.

(3) The Boards represented the interests of certain branches of trade and industry. Their function was consultative, primarily.

(4) The War Centrals were private, limited liability companies, and it was their business to bring about the exchange of the raw materials assigned to them. In general, the central purchase of raw materials was in the monopoly control of the Central, while its distribution to the industry using it was assigned to the corresponding Combine. Apart from the control exercised over them by the State they were private institutions, the activities and organization of which were regulated by articles of association countersigned by the Ministry of the Interior.

(5) Legal Corporations, *i.e.*, the Sugar, Alcohol, Molasses, and Chicory Root Centrals, acted as official distributive agencies for the uniform handling of specific groups of goods. Only the Centrals referred to under (4) were on a profit-making basis.

The actual organization of war economy was not based either in Austria or in Germany on a unified plan thought out in advance. The broad, guiding ideas underlying the whole structure were, however, clearly apprehended within a few weeks after the outbreak of the War by a handful of far-seeing economists and public servants,

who grasped the special character given to the struggle by the enemy's land and sea blockade. There were two determining postulates. In Germany, Walther Rathenau,<sup>4</sup> a great thinker and economist, was the first to perceive the necessity of a planned interposition of the State over the whole area of economic life, in order to control and secure the supply of raw material for war industries. On this followed a recognition of the urgent need of safeguarding the food supply, both of the army and of the civil population, through State management of agricultural production. Actually, the war economic régime of the Central Powers was neither more or less than the application of the principles and methods historically employed in beleaguered cities, on a scale so immensely extended as to constitute a phenomenon qualitatively as well as quantitatively new. Theoretically, the problem was to substitute for free trade at home and abroad and the working of the laws of supply and demand, a system of State economy, which with ever growing rapidity subordinated all individual economic interests, to the supreme common interest of the efficiency of the armies, the end being the maintenance of the unity of the realm throughout a protracted war. Thus, the idea of the "closed State" involved a progressive nationalization of the whole of its economic life. War, *ipso facto*, involved State control over railways, sea, river, and canal transport; and this control was speedily extended to cover such intercourse with neutrals as still remained open to the Central Powers. Important in this connection was the control over foreign exchange and currency transactions generally. Broadly speaking, the whole control system was in Austria purely empiric; it was determined, that is to say, by the day-to-day pressure of circumstances, except in so far as its lines were laid down as a result of Emergency and Mobilization Decrees. The actual immensity of the War—the first in which whole nations were ranged against each other—went so far beyond any previous conceptions that as a matter of actual working the economic aspect of war technique was evolved by war itself. In other words, as far as the Central Powers were concerned, war economy was the offspring of the unconditioned and unyielding will of political and military

<sup>4</sup> Rathenau's first public account of the development of war economy in Germany was contained in a lecture he gave before the German Society in Berlin on December 20, 1915. A report of this lecture appeared shortly afterward in Germany in pamphlet form.

rulers to hold out and carry through to a victorious conclusion, by the use of every moral and material resource possessed by their peoples. As far as the first two years of the frightful struggle go, it can be said—even when facts withheld from the public by the censorship, such as the mutiny of whole regiments of Slav troops, are taken into account—that loyalty to Empire and State dominated even the non-German and non-Magyar masses, that an absolute sense of duty was displayed by new formations as well as by old and tried regiments, and that countless proofs of incredible bravery and grim endurance through appalling perils and trials were given by them. Had this not been so, it would have been quite impossible for General Headquarters and the Government to have worked out in the two States of the Habsburg Monarchy a system of comprehensive war economy demanding immense sacrifices and an endurance, by women, children, and old people, to which the story of earlier epochs in the history of civilized Europe affords no parallel. What a few hundreds or thousands imprisoned in a fortress in former times had to bear in suffering, privation, and dearth of primary necessities of life, was now the lot of the millions composing the industrial population; for four years they bore it with unexampled patience and self-abnegation.

In the long run the controlling motive of the war-time economic régime in Austria was the effort to meet and lessen the evil reactions of war on the life of the people and to mitigate their extreme privations. Therefore it naturally started as a price policy. Shortage of grain and flour in the Austrian half of the realm compelled the Government, as early as the winter of 1914-1915, to go a long way in the direction of price regulation, first, by equalizing local supplies, and then by cutting out freedom to trade in grain altogether, the monopoly of the War Grain Board being substituted therefor. Price-fixing, central control of grain and flour consumption throughout the realm, and, finally, rationing, on the basis of a distinction between the self-supplier and the rest of the population, were thus the fundamental principles of the new war régime. Its subsequent development entailed their extension to cover every kind of food. The area of free exchange was progressively reduced and finally eliminated. This was done by the creation of the series of organizations already described. For the most part they were not purely official bodies, like the War Grain Control Board, but legal cor-



porations established by specific decree: Centrals, in the narrower sense of the word, and, as such, distinct from the War Economy Centrals, formed from existing industrial trusts or cartels and either private or public limited liability companies. Such were the Sugar, Gasoline, Brewery, Molasses, Starch, and Potato Centrals, the Wood Control, and the administrative sections of the so-called "Geos," *i.e.*, the Vegetable and Fruit Central, and of the Fodder Central.

War called forth a parallel development in industrial and commercial activity. It created demands for all kinds of industrial products, including many of which General Headquarters had never and could never have taken into account, from common articles of clothing, metal products, articles of wood, indiarubber, chemicals, glass, etc., up to the most complex products of the skilled mechanician, and the newest inventions of modern motor craft. The Government was compelled to introduce a planned State organization, comprehending the whole field of economic life. Here, as in the matter of food supply, it had to step in between the irresistible demands of the army and the vital needs of the civil population, as the advocate and representative of the latter. Coöperation between the Ministry of War, the civil government, and industry was necessitated not so much by the soaring of commodity prices as by the problem of raw materials for industry and their distribution between military and civilian needs.

Imported raw materials presented the first problem: cotton, for example. Here, as in other cases, Austria-Hungary could get its share of the supplies requisitioned or seized in France and Belgium only on the basis of a combination of the producers for army and civil needs. The Report of the War Organization of the Austrian Cotton Industry for 1914-1917 describes how the existing cartel covering the cotton industry of Austria and Hungary took over the whole task of functioning as the public organization of that branch of industry during the War.

The second great industrial war organization was that for the metal trades. Peculiar circumstances here demanded a special organization. The needs of the army caused "Metal Central Limited" to be formed as one of the earliest war organizations. Its operations began as far back as February 1915. Since it very soon became impossible, or almost impossible, to get any sort of raw material from



abroad, steps had to be taken to commandeer the entire supply available at home, and to arrive at some sort of principle of distribution as between the needs of industry and the army. It was of the first importance here to organize the use of spare metals, to collect such metals—lead, copper, tin, etc.—as were indispensable for munitions, from every industrial establishment in the provinces, and to replace them by iron or other substitutes. In this difficult and complicated process of methodical organization, the army had to depend on assistance from the industry. Organized in the Metal Central, it accordingly carried through a process of requisition that extended from firms, establishments, and shops using or working any kind of metal, down to the ordinary household, whose kitchen utensils were taken, and, in January 1918, even the locks and latches from the very house doors. In the case of copper supplies for electrical works, for example, a special committee of the said works carried requisition through, with the aid of electro-technical experts.

Space does not admit of any detailed description of the way in which the process here indicated was carried out in the case of a thousand branches of trade and industry. The procedure sketched in the case of cotton was typical of that applied to wool, metals, and other essential commodities. The introduction of control occurred earlier in some cases than in others. Sometimes pressure came from the army; sometimes, and, as time went on, more often, from the Government, which had somehow or other to provide the population with the bare necessities of existence. By the beginning of 1917 State control extended over practically the whole of production and distribution.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE STATE SOCIALISM OF WAR

ONE of the most interesting documents of Austrian war economics, the 1917 report of Chief Commissioner Riedl of the Ministry of Commerce, describes the increasingly rapid creation of a great structure of State economic control, subdivided under five heads. Very much the same kind of personnel managed this new "industrial self-government" both on its civil and on its military sides. This is an important point. The whole economic process was facilitated by the fact that in many cases the leading men in War Combines and in Central Trusts proper were the same. In both these parallel forms of war organization State supervision was exercised partly through nomination to the Boards of particular Centrals of members with special powers of interposition in the name of the Government. As a rule, one such Commissioner, or State-nominated member, was appointed by the Ministry of Trade or other departmental Ministry concerned. Thus, both on the War Combines and on the Centrals entrusted with strictly economic duties, there was a continuous coöperation between trade representatives—industrials, industrial officials, technicians, and merchants—and State agencies, which gave the former a determining voice in war economy as it extended and developed. The statistical work of War Trusts and Centrals, and their collection of supplies of raw materials, semi-manufactured and manufactured goods, put the Government in a position to lay down broad lines of economic policy, subject always to the demands of General Headquarters speaking for the army, and to carry them through by its decrees. Again, through War Combines and Centrals, the Government as a whole and departmental ministries such as Trade, Agriculture, and the Interior, and later, Food, could keep themselves informed on civilian needs, agricultural and industrial production, and labor conditions. The war-time economic system was characterized by the coöperation of three distinct interests,—first, the Austrian Government; second, industry and agriculture, represented by the various War Combines, Centrals, and sub-committees; and, third, military administration centered in the Ministry of War, covering the entire nation and all its

theaters of action. The Civil Government occupied a sort of central position between the Ministry of War with its vast and unremitting demands on agriculture, industry, and trade—and, through them, on the whole population—and the War Combines and Centrals, which it had formed to represent both producers and merchants, together with one or two organizations similarly established to represent the consumer. Willy-nilly, the Home Government and its departmental ministries had, in principle, to assume the rôle of consumers' representative, as against General Headquarters and the capitalist interests of industry, banking, and trade.<sup>1</sup> This being the case, the Civil Government and its officials were exposed to pressure both from the military and from the public which made itself more and more sensible as time went on, and led to continual friction and even actual conflict with the commanders of the army. Another special circumstance contributed markedly to this. Within the first year of the War, the Ministry of War had developed a vast administrative body. The steady expansion of its tasks and of the daily demands upon it, as the War dragged out its endless length, of themselves presented serious obstacles to its efficiency. There was delay and breakdown. With the best will in the world, officials, officers, and industrialists involved in the countless wheels of the war machine, in its multifarious departments, groups and sections, Combines, Centrals, and the rest found themselves, as a matter of course, often complicating or paralyzing each others' work, instead of helping it along and speeding it up. Nor did the lack of the needed power

<sup>1</sup> It must, of course, be noted that the Ministry of War was completely under the thumb of General Headquarters. Even in peace time the Minister of War was to all intents and purposes without constitutional responsibility, and in point of fact neither more nor less than a general answerable only to the Emperor. At best, he regarded the military Chancellery of the Monarch and the Chief of the General Staff as equal executive organs of the supreme commandship of the "All-powerful War Lord." In war time the Ministry of War was, from the outset, completely subordinated to General Headquarters. Military policy was directed by General Headquarters, the Central Staff and the Ministry of War, on the one hand, and, on the other, by the Austrian and Hungarian Civil Governments and the common Government—the latter, in fact, existing only in the person of the Foreign Minister, since the Minister of War was merely a general and the mouthpiece of General Headquarters, and the activity of the common Government's Minister of Finance was limited to such fragments of civil administration as the military dictatorship of war left intact in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

to overcome these purely technical and administrative obstacles merely add to the cost of operating all the machinery of government; it most surely diminished, and materially, the working strength which the whole system of war economy was able to put into its activities. But that has been true of the war governments of all great States when engaged in hostilities. These things were not peculiar to Austria-Hungary and matters were not much worse there than they were in Germany or France, in England, or Italy. For more than four years the armies of Austria-Hungary carried on a struggle which in many ways covered them with glory. They carried it on against adversaries whose military strength was many times greater than theirs, whose financial means were a hundred times greater, and whose resources in an economic sense, when estimated by their productive power and the raw materials they could draw upon, were incalculably greater. That is the best measure whereby to judge the capacity of the war administration of Austria-Hungary. Moreover, it did its work unremittingly, in spite of blockade and encirclement both by land and water, in spite of the constant decrease in the very buying power of its money, a decrease that was even more marked abroad than it was at home. Without cessation it put more and more hundreds of thousands of men into the field; it armed and clad and fed them. All this it did, too, so far as it could be done, with such native resources as the country had, helped out by substitutes. Above all, it did it while everything—foodstuffs as well as other raw materials—grew daily scarcer and of poorer quality. It was, finally, a war administration and a war guardianship that was able, on so many war fronts, constantly to establish new quarters and halting places, new hospitals, and new war-aid stations of every sort. And such work it did, in great measure, by organizing and directing the volunteer labors of the civil population.

The carrying on of the War meant that the army authorities were constantly burdening the Ministry of War with new tasks, tasks, too, that were always growing greater. To get them done the Ministry of War maintained a special inner organization; and that organization is a noteworthy example of the organic changes in the war administration of Austria-Hungary that were brought by the long years in which the Central Powers carried on their struggle. But of necessity such account as can here be given of it must be very brief and condensed. Enough that here we see another of those



phenomena which had their origin in the World War. That is to say, the War brought it to light, and it is this:

The true nature of modern war between great States, the vast masses of men and materials that it sets in motion, and the powerful and deep-reaching expansion and transformation of the duties of the army authorities have made war ministries their tool. Bit by bit the Ministry is taken hold of, changed, and extended in all directions. Even as in the tactics and strategy of war itself, so here, day-to-day military, economic, political, and administrative demands have to be solved empirically along lines adopted, more or less from hand to mouth, by officers, officials, and commanders, and grafted by them on to existing practice. A comparison of the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of War as it was before the War, with the same organism as adapted to the needs of modern mass warfare affords the clearest retrospective insight into this process. Before me lies the Order of Agenda for the Imperial and Royal Army of 1905. The second paragraph deals with the Ministry of War and its subordinate departments, and gives a detailed survey of their activities. Subject to certain minor modifications, between 1906 and 1914, it was in force at the outbreak of the World War. Take the account published in 1917 of the Departments of the Praesidial Bureau, with its divisions and subsidiary offices, and of the formerly independent offices and commissions of the Ministry of War. The changes at once become apparent. In peace time, the Ministry of War, as it existed from the time of the transformation of Austria-Hungary into a Dual Monarchy, exercised its functions through a Praesidial Bureau and fifteen departments, among which was divided the entire business of managing the army. In the case of every one of the fifteen, war meant an immense and continual expansion of work, necessitating all kinds of sub-division, and the addition of fresh departments, sections, groups, and sub-sections, an organization impossible to describe in detail. A few indications, however, will serve to indicate the reconstruction by which the War Ministry was adapted to meet its new economic and technical tasks.

Ten new departments were created. Department 16 dealt with the supply of munitions, and the creation and development of control departments, both within the army and in private establishments. It also handled the reorganization of mechanical equipment in coal-mining. Department 17 handled the supply of equipment for min-

ing, took measures designed to increase coal output and supplies to factories doing war work, collected statistics of coal stocks, and organized local distribution. Department 18 dealt with the actual supply of ammunition for the artillery and for small arms. Department 19 dealt with gas; 20 with high explosives (mines, bombs, and hand grenades); 21 with minor metals, such as lead, copper, zinc, tin, aluminium, antimony, etc.; 22 comprised the office of the Austrian Steel Commission; 23 and 24 dealt with steel production and cognate matters; 25 with mining, and commandeered and requisitioned stocks.

In addition to these new departments, a whole series of independent offices were set up as adjuncts to the War Ministry, among them being the Central Transport, War Telegraph, and War Surveillance Offices (the latter acting as centers for the State Police and the Board of Censorship), the two Central Depots for Army Supplies, the special Depot for Leather, Wood, and Mineral Oil Deliveries, and, finally, the Convalescent Aid and War Aid Offices. Moreover, to add to the special departments dealing with economic matters a special War Economy Office was set up in 1917, divided in its turn into three groups: (1) Executive; (2) Scientific; and (3) Statistical. This was in fact the central organ or General Staff for war economy, with a controlling voice in all arrangements with allied or neutral States made by any other department of the War Ministry. It represented the Ministry of War and the Trade and Customs Conference on the Commission for War and Transition Economy, on the Central Board for Import, Export, and Transit Licenses, and in all trading with foreign countries for raw materials or foodstuffs. It acted at once as a link between the army, the Government, and the various ministries of both States of the Monarchy, and as guide in the economic activities of them all. It centralized the control of raw materials and, at the same time, kept watch over social and political movements, and made preparations for economic demobilization. Its concern was with issues of principle, while the current daily business of supply occupied the various departments.

So vast had the machine now become, comprehending and controlling every department of life, and ruthlessly subordinating all alike, men and things, personal services, raw materials, and finished goods, to the iron law of a never ending war, that it is practically impossible to find a point from which it can be surveyed as a whole.

By the millions whom it dominated, this machine was felt or understood only as it affected them as individuals. In fact the war régime when fully developed can only be compared to a vast mechanism, driven by military demands, as if by some powerful motor. The War Ministry represented the connecting rods, carrying the drive of the armies over to the Civil Governments of Austria and Hungary; while, in Austria, the Ministries of Trade and Food were great supporting wheels, serving in the last resort, to connect military needs with production and consumption. The actual instruments of the régime were the civil servants in the ministries concerned, with their subordinate provincial, district, and local authorities, supplemented by officials from other departments and by business men, experts, engineers, chemists, technicians, industrialists, and merchants of all sorts, called in to render war service. The real organizers, however, were technicians, business men, and industrialists, nominally called up as reserve or militia officers. They, for the most part, brought in with them methods belonging to business rather than to bureaucracy, and in the various departments used their military authority as a means of "speeding up." Since men of the same sort were running the War Combines and Centrals set up by the Ministry of Trade, the result was that, all obstacles notwithstanding, the double wheels revolved so swiftly and efficiently that the huge machine here sketched in barest outline did, in fact, produce its quotas. The régime established between the Government and General Headquarters was a resultant of the coöperation of three factors: technical and commercial experts, called in to serve under the War Ministry; military chiefs in the War Ministry itself, in close touch with the armies in the field on the one hand, and, on the other, supported by trained professional and industrial men, employers, and working men, called up for war service, or at work in their civil employments; and civil servants, national and local, working under the general direction of the Ministries of Trade and Food.

In Austria, as in Germany, this war-time economic régime represented a complete transformation of the economic structure. It also influenced, profoundly, the method and being of the bureaucracy hitherto entrusted with State functions. To meet war burdens, the authorities had to enlist intellectual and executive assistance from industry and the professions. Thus, the economic departments of the Ministry of War, like the War Centrals under the Trade and



other Ministries, presented a singular dualism, a sort of doubly articulated self-government in industry and agriculture which, to some extent, represented a first stage in the realization of a Socialist order; to the extent, that is to say, that production and distribution were controlled by the State and coördinated by coöperation between civil and military servants of the public authority. The official Report of the Ministry of Trade for 1917, already referred to, clearly depicts the origin and characteristic marks of this peculiar system, born of the War.

It was the State Socialism of a State fighting a life and death battle, and blockaded by enemies on every side; a State that viewed production and consumption exclusively from the standpoint of holding out, no matter at what cost in life and treasure; a State stripped by the iron necessity of war of every shred of civil legislation, and claiming obedience by the stark might of army and bureaucracy. And yet the whole war régime was possible only in so far as the State, a mere vehicle of might, could rely on the coöperation of great industrial and agricultural groups, and, above all, of men in those groups of the highest scientific and technical equipment. Thus, there sprang up spontaneously within the compulsions of the war-waging State a singular system of industrial self-government, roughly outlined by the Government and forcibly inserted by dictatorial decree into the complex of existing economic life and legal sanctions. A mighty change was thus produced, as the direct outcome of war conditions, in the historic character and national methods of Austrian State administration. It is the outstanding merit of Richard Riedl, then chief officer of the Ministry of Trade, that he apprehended correctly in the very early months of the War the true significance of the first steps preluding the momentous phenomena of war economy, which, daily expanding and developing, were to assume a magnitude and complexity almost impossible to grasp as a whole. The multitudinous threads composing the kaleidoscopic warp and woof of the economic régime of war were, in fact, from the outset connected with the Trade Ministry. There, in good time, they were woven, and on a gigantic pattern. The profound changes that war must bring about in large-scale industry and trade were early recognized, together with the fact that after the War a transition period, which might be short, but was more likely to be long, must follow before there could be any re-establish-



ment of free competition. In this transition period, moreover, the State would have to retain most of, if not all, the economic functions assumed during the war period, in its own interest and in that of sound reconstruction. With this in mind, Riedl, in 1916, outlined a great plan for the transition period, based on a reorganization of the Ministry of Trade. The proposals set forth in his masterly *Memorandum on the Transition Period* were based on an analysis of the probable position of Austrian industry at the close of the War. Resolutely facing the problem of raw materials and of the foreign currency necessary to purchase them in the world market, Riedl set down the steps that would have to be taken if industry and exports were to recover. The leading idea of his *Memorandum*, accepted by the Government, was the maintenance of the new war-time organization of industrial life throughout the period of the restoration of civilian business life, and its use to facilitate the adjustment of trade and industry to peace conditions. Above all, he argued, State regulation of prices must be maintained:

In war, price-fixing largely took the place of market-bargaining. Maximum prices were established, first for foodstuffs, and then for a constantly increasing number of commodities. The inadequacy of this method, together with the urgent need of limiting consumption, eking out supplies, and securing greater equality in their distribution, compelled more far-reaching measures—the requisitioning of stocks, the regulation of consumption, and uniform management, from the standpoint of the common interest. Thus maximum prices led on to a uniform regulation of the price at which goods were taken over and redistributed. A reverse process was, in part, applied to the raw materials of industry. The establishment of stocks, through embargoes and restriction on sale, led step by step to interposition by the authorities in the processes of use and manufacture, and so to measures for taking over and distributing at fixed prices. Throughout the entire process thus forced on us by necessity, the goal aimed at was the substitution of a planned and organized management over a constantly extending sphere of economic life for methods of regulating consumption and price which had proved inadequate. It is in this direction that the administration must continue to move, as the War goes on, with a clear recognition of the fact that difficulties will grow as the area of regulation extends.

Believing thus, there must be systematic planning for the transition period. Meantime, however, the War went on; no man could

foresee its end. Riedl's *Memorandum*, therefore, stressed the urgency of improving the thoroughly unsystematic existing régime of war economy.

The General Commissariat, created in 1917, represents the high note in the intellectual development of our war organization. In origin a direct offspring of war needs, it was developed by our leading bureaucrats in such a manner as to extend State authority and administration over the entire sphere of what, before the War, had been private enterprise. One of the most remarkable phenomena in Central Europe during the years of the War is the way in which the most significant achievement of war government in the practical sphere derived its original, dynamic force, both in Austria and in Germany, from tendencies and movements of a State Socialist character, and then served in turn to reinforce and consolidate the conception of the sovereign, authoritarian State which dominates the whole of modern German thought. The history of Germany presents many similar instances of the national device of transforming a limited need, born of some special emergency, into a comprehensive ideal. In this case, too, they made a virtue of necessity. In other words, they built from the economic beleaguerment of Central Europe a new national ideology. War State Socialism was viewed as the first crystallization of a great new conception of the economic State. Elements apparently the most contradictory were fused in support of this. Tendencies affecting practically every class prepared for the universal acceptance of war economy and the entire apparatus of State supremacy. Thus, the working class, and a considerable section of the educated class in Germany had been thoroughly permeated by Marxism. In the generation immediately preceding the War, German "étatisme" had blossomed out in its fulness, and was now acting as an intellectual ferment, both in the minds of the governing class and in the teaching of the universities. Further, it was being practically applied by the bureaucracy, both of the Empire and of the several States. Between this and the program of the enthusiasts for "plan economy," there was but a step; and it in its turn led to an all-round socialization. The universal dominance of such ideas in the German Revolution and the mighty influence of Russia cannot be traced here. Throughout, however, what is true of Germany is true of Austria. Indeed, Austria was in some respects even more deeply moved by the Super-State ideology of war than

was Germany; the reason perhaps being that a group of highly gifted men, led within the civil service by Richard Riedl and among economists outside by Dr. Gustav Stolper, worked out and applied the theory and practice of war economy with the utmost energy, intellectual power, and economic insight. In Austria, moreover, ever since the 'eighties of the last century, a tendency toward State Socialism and State regulation of economic life had been steadily growing among the higher officials.

In the mind of its creator and of the writers associated with him, the General Commissariat was the first stage in the building up of the great economic State of the future. Commercial and financial advances secured by victory were to be consolidated in a united Austro-German State, while the dread disasters brought in the train of war itself were to be retrieved by a comprehensive reform of economic life, public and private. The essence of such reform was the centralization of State action and its extension over the widest possible area through the General Commissariat, acting as the executive organ of an Interministerial Commission. In March 1917, an Imperial Rescript established this Commission, which represented all the ministries concerned in any aspect of war or transition economy, presided over by the Minister of Trade. Preliminary work had, in fact, been going on for some time when the establishment of a Commissariat for Transition-Period Economy in Germany hastened the taking of decisive action here. Along with the Commission and the Commissariat, a third board was set up for the future State control of Austrian private enterprise in the shape of the so-called Main Central Committee, designed to act as supreme economic parliament for the whole of Austria. Both on the Main Central Committee, and in the thirty-six special Boards of Referees into which the General Commissariat was divided, the voluntary co-operation of experts was provided for. The Central Committee or economic parliament included the presidents of all the War or Economic Combines, with a member from each of them nominated by the Minister of Trade. The latter had, further, to arrange for the representation on it of other bodies constituted to deal with the problems of war or transition-period economy. Since the Central Committee was designed to act as an advisory Council to the Commissariat and as a central agency for the various war economic bodies, its president was, naturally, the General Commissioner him-



self. The best description of this remarkable organization is that given by Dr. Gustav Stolper in his excellent review *Der Volkswirt*.<sup>2</sup> He sums up as follows:

In the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Commission and of the General Commissariat, Austria took a long step ahead both of Germany and of Hungary in war and transition period organization. It remains to be seen how far Berlin and Budapest will follow our example. Even if they fail to do so, the necessity remains of solving all these questions in close understanding with Hungary and with Germany. Central organizations are required for the efficient protection of that community of interest in Central Europe which war has created. Through them, the urge to economic union between Austria-Hungary and Germany will be most strongly felt, and they are designed to create for such union those new forms that may achieve it without detriment to such legitimate and particular interests as are compatible with the needs of the whole.

The concluding words of this significant sentence reveal the fundamental idea underlying the entire philosophy of Austrian war policy and economics. It is identical with the idea of the future political and economic unity of Central Europe under Prussian leadership which Friedrich Naumann preached during the War with such emphasis and effect.

How far such a plan could actually have worked out, had the War ended differently, need not here be discussed. In actual fact, each of the Succession States, which together had formed the old Austrian Empire, met the transition in its own way; that, too, falls outside our scope. Without going into any detailed examination, however, of the practical measure of success secured by Riedl's 1917 and 1918 reforms, one may estimate their general significance and economic and social effects.

On one point no one who lived through the war years in Austria can feel any doubt. For the people, the régime was merely a painful part of the process of holding out, an aspect of the grim endurance imposed on them by the harsh necessities of war and war government. No consumer looked forward to any probable advantage, when the longed-for day of peace at last arrived, that might accrue to him from a progressively "thorough" organization of production, consumption, and exchange. On the contrary, after the

<sup>2</sup> *Der Volkswirt*, No. 27 (April 7, 1917), pp. 465 sqq.



experience of the first two years of war, the public, above all in the towns, looked upon any and every extension of State control, of Centrals, and trusts as making worse and even positively endangering the existence of the individual, especially in the middle classes. The fixing of maximum prices and the monopoly by the various war organizations, first of raw materials and later of commodities of every sort including food, meant for them a steady rise in the cost of the goods they had to buy; a steady cutting down of rations; a continuous increase, despite all legislative precautions, of illicit trading, accompanied by prices soaring far above the world-level, and a constant restriction in the supplies of raw materials and necessities. Nor was this all. The breakdown of the official system of distribution was glaring. It worked, in so far as it did work, on quite different lines in different parts of the country. There was no equality of supplies between town and country. In the towns, housewives had appalling difficulty in getting their allotted portions, whether of food or of goods, and had to stand in queues for hours in order to get them at all. All this, as the War wore on, bred in the minds of the people a dark despair, an acute bitterness against the whole war-time economic system, and, above all, against the Centrals. The failure of State economic organization at home was the principal, if not the sole cause of the steady decline of belief in the successful issue of the War and the consequent utter war-weariness of the urban population. The serious deterioration of communications with the southern front, in the summer of 1918, was the signal for the approaching collapse of the whole military and administrative powers of the Empire. "Thorough" organization proved powerless to resist the effects of the Hunger Blockade, effects which made themselves felt with frightful severity from one end of the realm to the other. The social reactions of this dire process became more and more apparent. The middle classes and, above all, those living on pensions, salaries, or fixed-interest-bearing securities, began to be ground between the upper millstone of high prices and the nether stone of progressive currency depreciation. The unlimited inflation of the period between the collapse and the break-up of the Empire rained bitter blows on them and completed their ruin.

Meantime new fortunes of a purely parasitic character sprang up like mushrooms under the umbrella of war economy—in other words, of the incapacity of the Government to carry out its own

regulations—products of gambling and profiteering, or of the illicit trading that had penetrated every department of life. A sharp edge was given to the suffering of those living in western towns and cities by the fact that most of these lucky parasites were men who had fled from the hardships and dangers of the eastern war zone to the west, and there had been taken in and tended by the government relief departments, to reappear in many cases in the hateful guise of the profiteer. In Vienna, especially, such men aroused the keenest resentment. The phenomenon in all its bearings did much to undermine the foundations of social and political order, and of confidence in the Government.

True, this failure cannot be attributed wholly to the War Government, or taken as passing a final verdict upon the economic philosophy so powerfully stimulated by the war-time economic régime. One should say that, both in Austria and in Germany, a mighty effort undertaken with great intellectual courage and supported by all the energies of people and government broke, and was bound to break, because more than four years of war had battered and shattered the morale of the people.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SECOND PERIOD OF WAR GOVERNMENT

THE complete victory of the German and Austro-Hungarian troops over the Rumanian armies was the last war news to reach Francis Joseph before his death, on November 21, 1916. His last important political act had been his appointment of Ernest von Koerber, Finance Minister and head of the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to be Premier in succession to Count Stuerghk, the day after the latter had met his death at the hand of Friedrich Adler. A change in government methods might have been expected from von Koerber. It did not, in fact, occur. When his appointment was confirmed by the young Emperor, Charles, Dr. von Koerber made only one alteration of importance in the organization of war government. He caused the food services to be coördinated in a new central office, the War Food Office, to which he gave the status of an independent ministry. He was well aware that the home food position was growing alarmingly worse, that it was the most difficult war problem facing the Austrian Government and one directly connected with the breakdown of the dualist constitution in the most important sphere of war government. During his brief term of office, his attention was therefore particularly directed to the economic relations between Austria and Hungary, the more so that at the beginning of the third year of the War Count Tisza found it opportune to force Austria to conclude a new, ten-year Compromise, rich in advantages for Hungary. For this reason, Tisza endeavored to induce the young Emperor to dismiss von Koerber, whom he regarded as the most dangerous opponent of such a Hungarian policy. In relation to Austria, the policy of the Magyar oligarchy and its allies, the Hungarian industrial and banking interests, had always been unscrupulous. The complete suspension of parliamentary government and the dictatorship of a Cabinet of officials seemed to afford them the most favorable opportunity of getting a new Compromise Law put through by Imperial Rescript and imposed on the people of Austria. Tisza easily enough won the first move in this game—the dismissal of von Koerber. A storm had blown up against him, at the time, from various quarters, and notably from among

the leading men in the German parties. Immediately on his accession, the Emperor, young and politically quite inexperienced, had fallen completely under the influence of a group drawn from various parties, whose central figures were two Bohemian landowners—Count Heinrich Clam-Martinitz and Count Ottokar Czernin, whom Emperor Charles had known as confidential friends of his uncle, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand. The removal of von Koerber and his Government, the dismissal of Count Burián and his supersession as Foreign Minister by Count Czernin, who thus became the real director of war government and policy, and, finally, the reconstruction of the Austrian Government under Clam-Martinitz, these events, following one another in rapid succession, ushered in the second period of Austrian war government.

The brief interval between the death of Count Stuerghk, the real creator of Austrian war government as a method, and the fall of the Koerber Cabinet was merely a colorless transition period between two systems. Comparing the later administration with its predecessor, one sees at once both the points of resemblance and of difference. Hitherto war government had been thoroughly unpolitical, *i.e.*, independent of political parties, as all Francis Joseph's official governments had with more or less justice claimed to be. Now, at a stroke, it became definitely political, the mouthpiece of a "political idea" held by the young monarch and his entourage. This inevitably carried with it the readmission of political parties of the country's various nationalities. Up to the War such parties had counted as political factors with Court and bureaucracy; since then they had been suffering from complete political inanition. Even the Emperor's counsellors had to see the absurdity of supposing that any political plan could be carried through without the co-operation of the people through their parties, or while they were, as they had been till now, kept by the War Surveillance Office entirely in the dark as to what was going on at the front, at home and in the outer world. Even in its last years and months, however, Austria was again and again to prove itself the old realm of realized improbabilities. The course steered by the new Government, headed by political leaders and composed in part of members of parliament and peers, was not really different from that of Count Stuerghk. But the fact that it was headed by political leaders caused keener reactions in public opinion and in the feelings of the various races.



From the first, the two great German parties had supported the attitude taken up by the Austrian and Hungarian Governments, under the influence of General Headquarters and of Berlin, to the non-German and non-Magyar peoples. Count Stuerghk, nevertheless, had always attempted, not wholly without success, to keep alive a certain personal friendliness with moderates among the Czechs, South Slavs, and Ruthenes; and, in various minor ways, for example, by the presence of Czech officials in his Cabinet, he had sought to modify Slav opinion. Early in 1915 the German National Union, comprising all Nationalist and non-Clerical sections, held a series of private conferences. On the assumption of a victorious end to the War, they there outlined a policy of understanding with the Magyars based on a reorganization of the Monarchy and the Constitution which was designed to safeguard the predominantly German character of the Austrian State. The main items in their policy were, first, Parliament should not be summoned during the War, because the German alliance and the security of the common front would be endangered if a knowledge of the treacherous attitude of the Czechs and South Slavs were allowed to reach and encourage their fellow nationals abroad and the enemy governments with which they were coöperating; second, at the proper time the Imperial Government should promulgate a new Constitution, which would once and for all terminate the national struggle that had been going on for over a half a century between Germans and non-Germans, by establishing Austria as a predominantly German State. The abandonment of Galicia would assure the Germans a majority in the Austrian Parliament, and German would then be recognized as the official language throughout the State; third, the alliance between Austria-Hungary and Germany should in the future be developed into the closest possible union on the basis of constitutional law.

A mighty impetus was given to all this by the victorious campaign, carried out with the assistance of the German armies, against Russia in the spring of 1915, and by the liberation of Galicia from Russian invasion. It reached its zenith with the publication of Friedrich Naumann's memorable "Central Europe." An extremely active agitation then began for the completest possible economic and military unification of the Central Powers after a "Peace of Victory." These ideas found a ready, and at times even an en-

thusiastic response, not merely among German Nationalists and the classes from which they drew their support, but among the mass of the peasants and small middle-class folk, mainly organized in the Christian Socialist party, and even among the Social Democratic working men. The traditional opposition of Austrian Big Business to any sort of tariff union with Germany gradually weakened under the pressure of the general drift of German public opinion in Austria. The movement was assisted by the open sympathy of certain leaders of the ruling bureaucracy, notably in the Ministries of Trade and Railways, and by the support of Naumann's ideas by leading publicists of the Austrian press. The acceptance by the overwhelming majority among the intelligent classes in Austria of this idea of future German domination in an Austria organically united with Germany aroused the liveliest apprehension and resistance not only among the Slav peoples but in Court and military circles and also among the great families of the aristocracy. They were still a force to be counted with; for, although universal suffrage had deprived them of their specially privileged position in the Lower House, they were still dominant in the Provincial Diets, where they composed two great parties; and they had lost nothing of their authority in the Upper House. In the Emperor Charles' new Government these two parties were represented by Count Clam-Martinitz and by Count Czernin and Dr. Baernreither. The Premier, Count Clam-Martinitz, was the traditional representative of the feudal section among the nobles, friendly to the Slavs and to the Clericals; while the other two were leading members of the Constitutional-Liberal, land-owning Electoral College of Bohemia. Very close to this group were the new Minister of Trade, Dr. Urban, an old leader of German-Bohemians against Czechs, and the outspokenly German Nationalist Finance Minister, Dr. Spitzmüller. The group was obviously in control of the new "political" war government. In the Cabinet, both Count Clam-Martinitz and Count Sylva-Tarouca, the new Minister of Agriculture, another Conservative noble, accepted the lead of their definitely German colleagues. The Minister of Education, Dr. von Hussarek, could not, as a strong Catholic in politics, take a nationalist point of view. His authoritarian outlook, however, caused him to agree more often than not with a policy of rigid German hegemony in Austria. Thus, although the two Conservative nobles maintained a sort of link with Czechs

and South Slavs, the German character of the new Government was indubitable from the outset.

At the same time, the changes in the personnel of the Supreme Command introduced by Emperor Charles soon after his accession, and above all the retirement of the Chief of the General Staff, Conrad von Hoetzendorf, and the removal of a large number of his leading colleagues from their controlling positions, notably minimized the pressure of General Headquarters on the Government and on home policy, until by degrees this influence, so potent since the beginning of the War, gradually came altogether to an end. The result was to place political action and diplomatic direction once more entirely in the hands of the Hungarian and Austrian Governments, and of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, subject only to the changing influences exerted by the Emperor and his personal entourage. The general direction of war policy however remained unchanged. The dominating influence of Count Czernin ensured the maintenance of an authoritarian, German view in home policy, now and for the future, on the lines originally laid down by the heads of the army. From first to last his policy assumed the solidarity of Austrian and German interests and the fullest agreement between their armies and governments. What was new was the fact, soon to be demonstrated, that this policy had the support of the German parliamentary groups. In March 1917, Count Czernin suddenly settled the great question: Was Parliament to be summoned or not? He summoned it, and the attitude of the German groups in Parliament was made plain to everyone. Further, it was plain that military supremacy in home affairs had dwindled to nothing. The military view of parliamentary institutions had not changed. Resistance to any limitation of the dictatorship had been embodied in Conrad von Hoetzendorf; when he was retired from the Supreme Command and transferred to the southern front, it broke down.

The political developments leading up to the momentous decision to summon Parliament can be very briefly outlined. The unconditional support given by the middle-class German Nationalist parties to its suspension, ever since the outbreak of war, was due in part to their fear of the effects which parliamentary conflicts between them and the Slavs were likely to have on the military situation. But mainly it was due to their hope that military victory would be followed by a change in the composition of the House itself. They



did not want it to meet again in its old form. They wanted a new House, constituted by a proclamation, issued at the right moment by the dynasty, which would express their Nationalist aspirations.

In the spring of 1915 they had with confidence drawn up the plan of such a new constitution, and one that would guarantee their own predominance; in March 1916 this was communicated to a wider circle of sympathizers as a "Memorandum on the Views of the German National Union on Reorganization in Austria." It lays down the following principles under the following heads:

*The Alliance between Austria-Hungary and the German Empire.*

The progress of the War has proved that closer union of the two Empires is a condition of existence for both. Such union is not only desirable for Austria-Hungary; it is also indispensable for Germany. Subject, of course, to the independence and autonomy of Austria-Hungary as a State, the aim should be to secure the permanence and constitutional establishment of the war alliance.

*The Economic Union of Central Europe.*

The solid foundation of such a union lies in the economic *rapprochement* of the two realms. It is, therefore, desirable to secure the closest trade union, to be developed, with due regard to varying conditions of production, to a complete tariff and customs union. The lapsing of the most-favored-nation clause of the Peace of Frankfort will pave the way for this. The economic union thus created may include other Central European States.

*Constitutional Changes.*

To strengthen Austria-Hungary and to enable it to meet its obligations as an ally, certain constitutional changes are requisite, such as will reduce to a minimum the internal strife which hitherto has weakened the efficiency of the Monarchy and prevented any kind of progress.

*Relations between the Two Halves of the Realm.*

The present legal relation between the two halves of the Empire should be maintained. Legal sanction should be given to the common control of foreign affairs and the army and, in both domains, to the



rights of the Crown. The customs union should be established for a minimum period of fifty years, and the quota arrangements<sup>1</sup> for a similar period. A common customs and tariff mechanism should be set up, consisting of officials from both States with advisory councils, on the basis of Article 22 of the existing Commercial Treaty. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should secure the assent of both Governments to all acts concerning foreign relations.

### *Galicia.*

Austria can only be strong when the State is freed from an intolerable Slav preponderance. Therefore, the close connection between the Crownlands and the State should be severed so far as Galicia is concerned.

Galicia should be excluded from any participation in the Reichsrat except when matters are involved which under the agreements with Hungary concern both countries. Constitutional measures should secure the rights of Germans in Galicia. This half of the realm should be called the "Empire of Austria."

### *Efficiency of Parliament.*

Parliament should be summoned again as soon as the necessary constitutional measures have been carried out. A new procedure should be adopted, to secure the efficient conduct of business.

### *Language Question.*

The use of German as the official language must be secured in the Austrian Empire to an extent consonant with the needs of State and a proper administration. The uniformly German character of the German provinces must be maintained. Subject to these conditions, the practical requirements of the populations speaking other languages in the other provinces can easily be met so far as official and educational needs go, due regard being had to economic conditions.

With this in view, the following prescriptions may be laid down (subject to special arrangements for Galicia) :

<sup>1</sup> The proportion paid respectively by Austria and Hungary for the support of the army, navy, etc.

German should be employed by all State, civil, and military authorities, and the judicial tribunals of higher instance.

All State authorities without exception should make reports and transact business in German. Non-German reports, in German administrative areas, are inadmissible. The official language there must be exclusively German.

In those areas where one or more other languages are current, these languages may be used for written and oral petitions, notices, etc., dealing only with the area in question.

### *Education.*

Legislative sanction is required for the erection, extension, restriction, or abolition of universities and educational institutions equal to them. The language in which instruction is given in such schools can be fixed or altered only by legislative means. Candidates in all State qualifying examinations must pass at least one subject in the official language.

Ministerial sanction is required for the erection of other than State secondary schools, on the recommendation of local authorities. In purely German areas, teaching in elementary schools shall be in German only. Private schools in these areas may be set up only in cases where provision for teaching in German is assured.

In mixed-language areas, the communal council shall, in general, determine in what language teaching is to be given. In areas where during the preceding five years there have been more than forty children of school age who speak a language other than that used in regular public instruction, an elementary school in their language may be established on the demand of their parents, if the latter live in the immediate neighborhood.

The consent of the communal authorities is required for the establishment of any educational institutions, other than elementary schools, whether public or private.

### *Single-Language Administrative Areas.*

An indispensable preliminary to constitutional reform, especially in Bohemia, is the establishment of single-language administrative areas.

German Austrians feel it a duty to put forward this demand,

both in the interest of the Monarchy as a whole, and of their own national life.

The above outline of reconstruction, on the lines of permanent German ascendancy, did not go nearly far enough, in many respects, for the extreme Nationalists in Austria. A special Memorandum was therefore prepared, notably by the members of the German Club in Vienna and the Alumni Unions of the German National Academic Association, acting with the German Councils in the various provinces, which set forth the views of these groups and of the German Radical Nationalist Party in the Reichsrat and in the Diets. As it was circulated about Easter, 1916, their Memorandum came to be known as the "Easter Demand." On almost every point its program went beyond that of the German National Union and followed out to its logical conclusion the idea that Germans alone being, in the full sense, citizens of Austria, their demands must always and everywhere prevail and be preferred, in the event of any conflict, to the claims, rights, or demands of the non-German peoples. This point of view is most definite in the paragraphs dealing with the future of the schools in Western Austria:

The State must provide German schools. In areas where languages other than the State language may be officially employed, there must be adequate facilities for learning German.

Public instruction must ensure that every child at the completion of his school life at least knows the State language. It is for educational authorities to determine the stage at which instruction in German is to be given, and the form of such instruction, subject to the proviso that it be not begun later than the third school year or in the third class. The State language shall be an obligatory subject in all non-German higher-grade and secondary schools, teachers' training colleges, trade, vocational, and technical schools, and must everywhere serve as the language of instruction for certain subjects.

German elementary schools must be set up in mixed-language areas where they are needed, or where it is in the interest of the State that they should exist.

In the appointment of all teachers, directors and inspectors for primary, middle and secondary schools regard should be had to the maintenance of the German character of the institution. On all local, district and provincial school boards which are not sub-divided for all the nationalities concerned, German schools must be represented by State-nominated German members.

In areas where German is the sole official language German public schools alone may be set up. Schools based on any other language in such areas shall be closed.

The number of non-German secondary schools in mixed-language areas is to be reduced to what is actually necessary; new non-German secondary schools are not to be established.

State supervision of personnel, materials, and educational methods in all schools should be conducted with constant reference to the needs of the State, and especially to the education of the young in citizenship.

Communal Councils in mixed-language areas shall establish new public elementary schools on a non-German basis only when requested so to do by parents or guardians of children of school age, when, at the time of the request, such parents or guardians have resided for ten years continuously in the area, and speak the language in which instruction of the children is desired. It must further be established that for an average of five years, 40 children of school age would have attended such a school, and that no alternative school exists within a radius of four kilometers.

Parliament shall control all legislation bearing on primary, secondary and higher-grade schools.

No less characteristic are the demands in this program for "such relations between Germans and other races as shall permanently ensure and maintain the dominant political and cultural position of the German race." Special protection and privileges for German institutions, settlers, and undertakings in the Sudetic and Southern Crownlands are also demanded. On relations with Hungary the program follows the lines of the German National Union, as also in urging future union between Austria-Hungary and the German Empire.

Thus in 1916 German Nationalist plans for the future were crystallizing in a form which entirely ignored the fact that Austria was a combination of many different races. It also saw growing discontent among the masses in the towns, bitter dissatisfaction with food conditions, and a universal war-weariness. This misery began to take form in political demands voiced by various groups. The Social Democratic party was beginning to revive and it demanded the calling of Parliament. In this it was openly and emphatically backed up by middle-class democratic opinion in Vienna, always more or less sympathetic.

For wholly different reasons, the same demand found support in



the upper circles of Austrian society, notably in the small but politically very influential group of land-owning nobles. The plans of the German Nationalists, their efforts to get Austria permanently incorporated in and subordinated to Germany, alarmed these Conservatives. Their strongest political conviction was the necessity of maintaining the Habsburg Monarchy as an independent European power. From this point of view they began to regard a return to constitutionalism as more and more necessary. Many members of the House of Peers viewed the actual working of the dictatorship and the consequent aggrandizement of Hungary with grave apprehension, and were definitely hostile to its further development. Finally, in the summer of 1916, Count Sylva-Tarouca, one of the most respected of Bohemian landowners, arranged a confidential political gathering in his house, to which he invited leading members of both parties, commoners and peers. The object of the consultation was, if possible, to reach a *modus vivendi* between Germans and Slavs and some agreement as to the steps to be taken to secure the reopening of Parliament. In these discussions the Czech leaders expressed perfect readiness to coöperate, but the Germans, with the radical group at their head, obstinately set their faces against any such proposal. The Stuerghk Government would not even consider the more limited demand for a meeting of the Delegations elected in 1913. The strength of the demand for the abolition of the dictatorship among educated and democratically minded men and women in Vienna was demonstrated by the announcement that a public meeting was being organized to discuss the demand for a meeting of Parliament, by a committee composed of leading citizens. The Government forbade the meeting. A few days later Count Stuerghk met his death at the hands of Dr. Friedrich Adler. Count Stuerghk's successor, Ernst von Koerber, was greatly respected in Liberal and Social Democratic circles in Vienna; but he gave no sign of his views. The death of Francis Joseph produced a temporary lull; but the new Government which succeeded that of von Koerber found itself face to face with the question and all the vast problems involved in it. The inclusion in the Cabinet of two old and respected German-Bohemian leaders, Dr. Baernreither and Dr. Urban, seemed to indicate that the view of the German parties—that constitutionalism could not be restored while the War was going on—would prevail; Count Czernin, the effective head of the new Govern-

ment, and a member of the German land-owning group, at first expressly rejected any idea of a meeting of Parliament. The personal attitude of the young Emperor, then completely under Czernin's influence, was very doubtful. The fact that he had refused at the time of the von Koerber Ministry to take the prescribed oath to the Austrian Constitution was regarded by most of those who had hoped that the change heralded a new era, as a bad sign; they feared that the Emperor had been converted by his entourage to the idea of issuing a new constitution, guaranteeing German ascendancy, and hence could not take the oath. Count Czernin, who was responsible for the Emperor's refusal, may well have perceived the grave disadvantages war-absolutism involved for Austria, especially in its relations to Hungary, and the very dangerous fruit it was bearing in the shape of the growing agitation being carried on abroad by Czech and South Slav *émigrés*. What weighed more with him, however, when he took over the reins of government, was the view that it was impossible to call the former House together, and that its meeting must be preceded by the establishment of new procedure and the promulgation of a new constitution designed to restore German centralization in full authority. Things, therefore, stayed as they were. The Stuerghk régime remained in force.

In view of the foregoing it is all the more surprising to find Count Czernin, in March 1917, turning squarely around on the course on which he had so recently started, and putting before a meeting of the Cabinet, summoned for the purpose at his own request, the proposition that Parliament should speedily be summoned. Almost at once it was called upon officially to reassemble on May 30. Meantime, preparations for constitutional reform went on, for some time behind closed doors. Baron von Handel, who had been Governor of Upper Austria, was called to Vienna to assist in them. The first Russian Revolution, however, produced an effect so profound on the masses of the people that the German Nationalist plan had to be all but abandoned. Although they had several members in the Cabinet, the Revolution in Russia filled the German parties with deep misgivings. In the upshot there assembled on May 30, 1917, the same House of Representatives that had been sent home by Count Stuerghk in March 1914. He had ostentatiously converted the Parliament House into a temporary hospital for officers, for which it was not in the least adapted; now, it had to be hurriedly

cleared, cleansed, and restored to its proper use. Within the first few days, much against the will of the secret and open enemies of Parliament, who had demanded the promulgation of new rules as a preliminary to any meeting, an effective improvement in procedure was unanimously adopted by the House itself, and at once put into operation.

The first meetings witnessed solemn declarations by the leaders of the Czech and South Slav parties that made only too plain the rifts driven by three years of war deep down to the foundations of the State. These declarations and the attitude of the Germans showed that little or nothing was left of the old feeling of State solidarity, on which Austrian existence, in the last resort, depended. The pathos, the passionate appeals which had formerly characterized nationalist utterances in the House had gone. In their stead there spoke the immovable determination of peoples who thought only of themselves, saw the War as an opportunity for their own national statehood, and felt not the smallest regard for the unity of the Empire as a whole. Plain for all to see was the concentration of the Czech and South Slav leaders on a single object, the achievement for themselves of a "Path to Freedom." They looked only for the day when the common house of nations, ruled for centuries by the Habsburgs, was to fall in fragments under the shattering blows of enemies even now beating at its gates. Ever since the United States had joined the world alliance against Germany and its allies, the Slav *émigrés* in London and Paris had been convinced that the collapse of the Monarchy and the end of the Empire were inevitable. Day by day this conviction was being disseminated among the middle and working classes by the skilfully conducted and powerfully supported agitation of the *émigrés*, and by the "mafia" which, in defiance of all regulations, they were carrying on at home. True, the Czech and Slovak people for long remained quiescent, and fulfilled all their duties to the State. This was not merely due to fear; the great mass of the people, and, above all, of the country people, was by no means converted to revolutionary ideas. From the beginning of 1917 on, however, evidence was accumulating on every hand of the social break-up that war, high prices, the "control" system, and inflation were spreading through the entire body politic. Mass desertion of Czech, South Slav, Rumanian, Ruthenian, and Italian troops at the front, and the temper of the non-German peoples



behind it, showed that everywhere the end of the War was beginning to mean, and shape itself into, a catastrophe for the Empire. It was in that form that men saw it approaching.

Meantime, in the House of Representatives, members sat side by side on the semicircular benches more or less quietly, even if they were not animated by particularly friendly feelings. An oppression in the atmosphere seemed to restrain exasperated outbursts of national animosity, and made them less frequent than before the War. It was only when German Radical speakers denounced the treachery of non-German soldiers, and the "defeatism" of the Czech intelligentsia, or declared that traitors who deserved the gallows were being spared, that the tide of feeling foamed up on both sides and stirred the representatives of the suffering peoples to despairing passion. Generally speaking, however, the external aspect of Parliament remained unaltered throughout 1917 and almost to the end; indeed, it can be said that as the catastrophe drew nearer the impression made by this assembly of differing races grew more quiet and subdued. As the military position and the state of the food supply grew more desperate, as the sense of the approaching end of the War settled upon the spirits of the majority of the German members,—though they went on hoping almost to the last—and the Slav deputies were filled with a conviction of the imminent victory of the Entente and of their own approaching triumph, the sessions gave back a fainter and fainter echo of these opposing feelings. In the Upper House the serried ranks of elder statesmen, generals, retired officials, captains of industry, and aristocratic landowners preserved, to the end, their classic decorum and traditional repose of manner. Only once was this calm broken by a passion such as that House had hardly ever witnessed before. Dr. Lammasch, the noblest champion of pacifism, boldly gave utterance there to those principles of the brotherhood of man, which had characterized his whole long and honored career. This speech was a challenging reproof to the demands being made by one side for a "peace of victory" and by the other for "war to the bitter end."

The Government, having called Parliament, had, of course, to try to secure a majority in the House which would at least assure the passage of a budget, and give it a following sufficient to prevent the formation of a solid anti-Government majority. The results of the negotiations carried on by Count Clam-Martinitz and his col-



leagues in the weeks preceding the meeting of the House were far from cheering, although the Government attempted to modify the dictatorship it had built up by decrees. Thus, on June 16, 1917, the Ministry withdrew the three Imperial Decrees based on Paragraph 14 of the Constitution which, at the outbreak of war, had transferred the powers of the provincial governors in those parts of Austria bordering upon the war fronts to the military commanders there in authority. At the same time there was a certain relaxing of the censorship and police activities of the War Surveillance Office. The decision to call Parliament involved some removal of the restrictions on meetings and associations. In point of fact, the issue of new Imperial Decrees under Paragraph 14 to meet certain social needs arising from the War was, now as before, a misuse of the Constitution; these Decrees did, however, serve to help the new régime and the local authorities to get back more or less to constitutionalism, and to some extent to give the population a certain confidence in the Government.<sup>2</sup>

A new Ministry for Social Welfare was set up, with Dr. Joseph M. Baernreither, one of the oldest and most respected of Austrian social reformers and statesmen, at its head. This, with the establishment of a second new department in the shape of a Ministry of Food, was part of the design to prove to the world that the change in the Monarchy had brought with it a great change in the spirit and nature of the State. Success was not achieved by those tactics, however. On the one hand, the spirits of the people had been overcast with the deepest gloom by the failure of the attempts made in

<sup>2</sup> The extreme care with which the Ministry announced this change in the spirit of the Government in the midst of war is made evident by the official notice of the summoning of Parliament on May 30. It states:

"The Government has decided to call Parliament to meet on May 30, to deal with the food question, as well as economic, social, and financial matters arising out of the War; and to put before it a plan of work to cover not merely the present session but an extended activity on its part; to arrive, in the meantime, at an agreement on these matters with the various parties; and, immediately thereafter, to modify the political censorship.

"The Government expects to find in Parliament support for its efforts, in this hour of extreme political tension and supreme crisis for both State and people, to provide not only for what is necessary at the moment but to lay foundations for the future life together of the peoples of Austria. It will not falter in the purpose it has set before it, the needful regulation of the language questions in all administrative matters, and of the introduction in

January 1917, by the Central Powers to arrive at a peace by negotiation, and by the entry, very soon afterward, of the United States as a belligerent on the side of the Entente. On the other hand, as the official announcement of the calling of Parliament showed, the Clam-Martinitz Government was only employing the old methods, half-hearted, or worse, traditional in Austria. The real question—the introduction of complete equality among peoples and a genuinely federal reconstruction—was carefully left out. This being so, it was not surprising that the reception of the Prime Minister's first political pronouncement in Parliament was a severe disappointment to him. There was no response there, or from the public outside. Indeed, Count Clam-Martinitz and the majority of his ministers were compelled to see that their Government could not carry out the task with which the Emperor had entrusted it. Their position was obviously critical. But their first offer to resign was not accepted.

When it was renewed at the end of June, a dreary crisis arose. Those in contact with opinion at Court, with the outlook of the higher officials, and the tone and temper of parties, found there a picture of utter confusion, aimlessness, and ignorance of the real forces, national and social, that were then obviously making for the break-up of the Empire, such as well-nigh killed any hope of a turn for the better, any salvation of Empire and Dynasty from the dangers that encompassed them. And yet at Court, and above all in the personal entourage of the young Emperor, optimism was still fed by the reports that came in from time to time of partial successes on the three great military fronts. With this optimism went a naïve reliance on the old loyalty of the Austrian peoples to the

the different provinces of corresponding language regulations as and when they may be needed.

"In regard to matters within the scope of Parliament, the Government will get into touch with parties and groups on the question of their further treatment, and in the future lay before Parliament proposals under these heads. So far as the Kingdom of Bohemia is concerned, the Supreme Rescript of July 26, 1913 contemplated the employment of the counsel and coöperation of tried and experienced men in the working out of the regulations for carrying its principles into effect. The present Government, viewing such regulations as indispensable to our State life, will take steps to secure the execution of the Supreme Rescript. It will, at the same time, take measures to carry out the Rescript of November 4, 1916, dealing with the Kingdom of Galicia, and, of course, endeavor to secure a rapprochement of the two races inhabiting that country."

Dynasty. This was still a slogan in the official and non-Social-Democratic German press. Indeed, this misconception of the facts was one of the circumstances which blocked the way for that creative political action and complete abandonment of the century-old tradition of strongly centralized government which might perhaps even then have saved the Empire.

The core of the immediate problem lay in the fact that the Government had to rely upon the German parties to carry out its alleged program, but could not secure the necessary majority for the purpose unless the Polish Club continued to play its part as faithful ally. True, the latest political act of Francis Joseph had been to issue a Rescript, on November 4, 1916, on the future organization of the Kingdom of Galicia; but it was well known that the Austro-Hungarian view on this matter and that of the German army command did not agree. Knowledge of this conflict made it impossible for the Polish Club to play its old part of friend of the Government. So, although sections of the Club, in return for services rendered in the shape of minor concessions, were at the Cabinet's disposal, the Club as a whole exploited with skill and success the see-saw between Entente policy, the German army's annexation plans, and the desire of the Viennese Government to keep Galicia in the Habsburg Monarchy. Its situation, however, became extraordinarily difficult after Russian Poland had, thanks to the Russian Revolution and the proclamation of the Soviet Republic, become independent of Russia. The Austrian Government still hoped that, as in the past, it would be able to get together some sort of parliamentary majority between the Germans and the Polish Club, with fractions from the smaller nations like the Ruthenians, the Rumanians, and the Italian Conservatives, sufficient to pass the Budget and meet the other "necessities of State."

From spring to the beginning of July 1917 the parliamentary crisis dragged on; a would-be solution was then found in the appointment as Prime Minister of Dr. Seidler. Previously head of a department of the Ministry of Agriculture, he had proved an admirable official in his own limited sphere, but was totally unfitted for any political task, above all for one as desperately difficult as that presented to an Austrian Premier in the fourth year of the War. His knowledge of the political problems of the Habsburg Monarchy was below rather than above the average. His appoint-



ment, therefore, was perceived by well-informed observers at the time to be the most fatal step that could have been taken by the young Emperor. The political agony of Austria, indeed, dates from the moment when this official was entrusted with the appalling task of halting the coach of State when it had reached the very edge of the abyss. Dr. Seidler, with all his economic training and administrative experience, had absolutely no first-hand knowledge of the national and political conditions and problems of Austria, or of the ruin that the War had brought upon the Habsburg Empire. Nature and education had made him the perfect model of the old Austrian bureaucrat. His Alpine origin and outspoken German National leanings caused him to present to all the non-German parties in the House the personification of the kind of official Minister and bureaucratic methods which they only too justly regarded as mainly responsible for the decline of the Austrian State in the last generation. The impression of the new Government as dominated by German National ideas, and wholly out of touch with the currents that the War had set seething and boiling in the minds of the non-German races, was strengthened rather than weakened by the other Ministerial appointments. The nomination of a high official of Slovene nationality as South Slav National Minister, and of a Ruthenian professor of Chemistry at the Czech University as Minister of Health, showed the naïveté of Dr. Seidler; he hoped by such means to bring about an understanding with the Slav parties and to isolate the Czechs.

Impossible here to trace, stage by stage, the parliamentary Calvary of Dr. Seidler's War Government, which lasted for nearly a year, or down to July 1918. So long as Count Czernin, as Foreign Minister, remained the real leader, Dr. Seidler was to consent to act in a purely subordinate capacity while taking parliamentary responsibility for Czernin's acts and, in particular, for the separate peace with Russia made by him in agreement with von Kühlmann at Brest-Litovsk. Some day it will be possible to give the detailed historical description that ought to be given of this last year of the Habsburg Monarchy, the death struggle of the oldest of the great dynastic powers in Europe. Our task is a more limited one—to indicate how far the War Government, in so far as one could be said to exist after the reassembling of Parliament, sought to maintain itself in the midst of the daily struggles of races and nationali-



ties. The position both of the Clam-Martinitz Government, and that of the Seidler Government which followed it, may be most aptly compared with that of a small corps, fighting a hopeless rear-guard action. Dictatorial absolutism had been abandoned on the accession of the young Emperor. The new summoning of Parliament expressed a sincere intention of returning, in form at any rate, to constitutional methods. Nevertheless, the Government also endeavored to maintain such a degree of dictatorship as was regarded as indispensable by the leaders of the army, whose political demands, of course, had become very much more moderate since the removal of Conrad von Hoetzendorf. Emperor Charles' Ministers were well aware how very difficult their parliamentary position would become if they had to defend and answer for military dictatorship. Therefore, of their own free will, they abandoned certain quite untenable assumptions of authority which the Supreme Command, without any sort of opposition, had been suffered to take on itself by the Stuerghk Ministry. For instance, as we have said, three decrees were withdrawn which had in wholly unconstitutional fashion taken away the administrative and police powers of the Provincial Governors. By withdrawing them a first if quite insufficient step was taken toward the demolition of that military dictatorship over the Civil Government which had lasted since the War began. Very much more than this, as the first parliamentary session showed, was demanded by all the great national parties, except the German, as well as by all the Social Democrats. Everyone felt that the meeting of the Reichsrat had produced a perfectly anomalous state of affairs. The constitution, practically suspended since the outbreak of the War, and the new war-time military absolutism, now stood side by side. Plainly, as long as the War went on, the fact that Parliament was in session was not going to alter the organization or the spirit or the working of the system of war government created by General Headquarters and Count Stuerghk. No one imagined that there would be any question of peaceful dispossession, by parliamentary parties or majority resolutions, of the actual, historic holders of power or of their subordinate and ruling bureaucracy. That being so, the opposition had to go warily to work, lest they should arouse a reaction against Parliament in army circles that might have disastrous consequences for the reawakened spirit of constitutionalism in Austria. And yet, however moderate the House of Representatives might be in its op-

position to the War Government and in its demonstration of the evils caused by the system, the new Austrian Government was bound to have the utmost difficulty in commanding the necessary, though small, majority in the House; such a majority, for example, as Count Stuerghk had been able to rely on in 1913. The very existence of the House, with its public debates, and the freedom of speech it offered to every nation, party, or politician hostile to the War, opened the floodgates of a stream bound, in its very nature, to work against war absolutism in government and administration.

In point of fact, the flag of battle against the system, method, and spirit of war government as created in 1914 waves over the whole of this last epoch in the life of the Austrian Central Parliament. At its opening, solemn declarations of ruthless hostility to the continuance of the Dual Monarchy and of the Austrian unitary State were delivered by the Czech and South Slav parties, who asserted, without qualification or reserve, the right of the Slav peoples to independence, and thereby proclaimed unconditional opposition to the Emperor's Government. Equally definite was the opposition of German Social Democracy, which at the opening of the session, inveighed against the War itself and against the methods of war government.

The various Polish sections that made up the Polish Club now transferred to the floor of the House the moves in their complicated and devious but highly capable policy. Theirs was a purely tactical game. They had to play with the efforts of the Central Powers to create a united Poland, subordinate to them, in such a fashion as to clear the way for the plans of the Polish *émigrés* in London and Paris for a free and independent Poland, in alliance with the victorious Entente. This last was the solution most desirable from the point of view of Polish nationalism and the sacred ideal of the restoration of a united Poland. The division of Austrian Poles into Conservatives, middle-class Democrats, Social Democrats, and the National or all-Polish group, strongly organized from Warsaw before the War, made it easy for the general directors of Polish policy to adapt their action to the phases of the military situation, and to exploit to the utmost and for as long as possible their traditional position of control in the Austrian Reichsrat. It was, of course, broken by the events following the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, notably the efforts of the German General Staff to set up a Greater Ukraine,

including Eastern Galicia and Chelm, as a German vassal state in the East. Polish tactics, however, triumphed in the end. Without ever coming to open conflict with their old protector, the Austrian dynasty, or their old allies in Parliament, the Germans, the Poles succeeded in emerging from the ruins of the Monarchy in full possession of the ancient political prestige they had enjoyed in Vienna and taking up in complete security their new position as ally and *protégé* of London and Paris.

In the House, the foreground was undoubtedly occupied by the political struggle carried on by Czechs, South Slavs, Poles, and Ruthenians, in the interest of the future National States planned by their *émigrés*, and encouraged by the Entente, especially after President Wilson's statement of America's war aims. While employing every available parliamentary method—speeches, questions, resolutions—to carry on their agitation in public, they managed, in private, to maintain perfectly good relations with the Government and the Viennese Bureaucracy. The German middle-class parties carried on a purely defensive fight. They stood solidly for the alliance with Germany, and for the annexation aims of the German army, the policy of a "peace of victory." This was the foreground. But the real work of the House was the struggle, led by the German Social Democrats, with the support of a handful of democratic German members and the help of the Slav parties, against the "state-of-emergency" policy maintained ever since 1914 and throughout the realm by the military authorities—a system the actual and disastrous features of which were gradually becoming visible to the entire population, thanks to the fact that a modification of the censorship had been enforced by Parliament.

The first objective in this struggle was that "emergency" law-making by which the War Government had suspended and militarized the ordinary system of civil jurisdiction; the Judicial Committee, consequently, was the real battleground. There, from the first, the German Nationals and Christian Socialists who stood by the Government had to face a majority set upon redressing the wrong committed in subjecting the greater part of the civil population to the military courts, and, as far as possible, arresting the deadly effects of this system of "blood justice" by restoring civil trial by jury. In resolutions of July 6, 1917, the House, under pressure from the Opposition parties, refused its consent to all the



decrees under Paragraph 14 bearing on criminal proceedings; *i.e.*, to the Imperial Decrees of July 25 and November 4, 1914, temporarily subjecting civil persons to court martial and to the Imperial Decrees of July 7, 1915, January 2, and December 27, 1916, dealing with the suspension of trial by jury. The judicial control of the military courts and the making of emergency laws in that sphere were thus swept away and the keystone of the whole emergency system struck from the arch of dictatorship. In a certain quite limited field, some exceptional provisions in the judicial sphere remained necessary; in those districts, that is to say, where the civil courts having been put out of action by military events, the military courts had to exercise certain functions in relation to civilians. To meet this, a bill was introduced by the Government which, after being amended in a limiting direction by the Judicial Committee, was passed by the House. At the same time a bill proposed by Dr. Gross, a democratic member from Galicia, was accepted by the Judicial Committee and also by the House. It gave civilians who had been condemned by a court martial, acting under the Imperial Decrees now determined as unconstitutional, the right to demand a retrial of their case by the ordinary civil tribunal. A third measure, closely connected with the foregoing, was worked out by the Constitutional and Judicial Committees, and dealt with the revision of the lists of jurors. This measure was necessary, because, while the jury system was brought back into force by the work of the Judicial Committee, one result of three years' intermission was a lack of any usable lists. New regulations were therefore indispensable, if the military jurisdiction was to be got rid of in fact and not merely in name. These three bills brought the House of Representatives into collision with the House of Peers. The latter introduced a number of amendments to the fundamental law, arising from the refusal of the Peers to accept the perfectly sound view of the Lower House that the Imperial Decrees, thereby rescinded, had been unconstitutional from the start. The Upper House rejected the clause in the bill which would have transferred to the ordinary courts cases in which judgment had not been delivered by the emergency courts on or before July 7, 1917. This conflict lasted right down to the autumn session of 1918. Agreement was reached only on the bills dealing with the subjection of civil persons to courts martial, and the revision of military sentences passed in the field;



and these bills became law. The Jury Trial Bill failed, owing to lack of agreement between the two Houses; as did that drafted by the Judicial Committee prescribing the responsibility of the State for extra-Constitutional acts committed by its servants in the course of their duties whether military or civil.

For the general public, these debates proved something of a revelation. The military authorities attempted, it is true, to maintain the censorship, and applied it even to speeches in the House; but their efforts were vain. Light was now cast upon the actual and tragic consequences of the system of military and emergency jurisdiction; consequences not confined to the war zones but extending to all parts of the realm, as were the political persecutions carried on by the General Staff. Questions, resolutions, and speeches, by Czech and South Slav members showed the German public in Austria, for the first time, the depth and passion of the resistance of the Slavs to the War itself and, above all, to war government as exercised from Vienna under the domination of the Supreme Command. That resistance went back to the very beginning of the War, and it had grown and been fed by the actions of the Government. Dr. Kramarž, the most distinguished Czech political leader, had been arrested and condemned by a court martial sitting in Vienna. A large number of Czech, Slovene, and Croat members of Parliament and of Diets had been arrested and subjected to long terms of internment without being condemned; thus a considerable number of Italian members had been interned; in Bohemia and Moravia long terms of imprisonment and heavy punishments had been imposed on persons charged with high treason, among them many men and women of the educated classes. From the war fronts came the news of the mass desertion of Czech and Slovene officers and privates. From abroad, from neutral and enemy countries, came a more and more successful propaganda, openly directed against the Habsburg Monarchy and the Austrian State, and reports that numerous Czech legions were now fighting as auxiliaries of the Entente. These and other facts made the background for the unwearied efforts of the majority in the Judicial Committee—a majority composed of German Social Democrats, Czechs, Polish Radicals, Ruthenians, and South Slavs—to reduce, as far as possible, the appalling power of the military dictatorship within Austria and to curb the system of war government and administration.

In these efforts, however, the national parties took less and less part. After the spring of 1918, and particularly after the failure of the great German offensive in France, everyone felt instinctively that the War was drawing to an end. The Lower House became more and more obviously a congress of the different peoples of the realm, who, different as might be the point of view of Germans and of non-Germans, began to count on achieving the independence of their national States. In such circumstances there was no real driving force left behind the effort to reduce the awful home pressure of war government and the power of the army.

Nothing could better illustrate the traditional sterility of political life in Austria, or the paralyzing hold of merely formal and juristic notions in its parliamentary legislation, than the steady rejection by the Upper House of the bills of the Judicial Committee designed to mitigate the dictatorship, and their rejection exclusively on technical grounds. A constitutional argument was put forward, but the real point was that the Peers wished to maintain unimpaired the authority of the military tribunals and the "dictatorship paragraph." Nothing could more painfully sum up and symbolize old Austrian constitutionalism than the fact that the last independent action of the House of Peers, its strongest representative, should have been the defense of the famous "fourteenth paragraph," that article in the constitution which, as a concept of absolutist government in constitutional forms, had in the last generation of the life of the realm contributed more than any other item to shatter the hopes of democratic and liberal-minded citizens in the continued existence of Austria as a great State. It is also characteristic that the sole remedy for the appalling evils produced at home by military dictatorship and military jurisdiction, should have come, not from the legislative body, but from the Crown. Such was the case. On his own initiative, the young Emperor, on July 2, 1917, issued a general amnesty to all those who had been condemned by emergency military courts. Thus, to the last, the strongest motive force for good or evil in Austrian State life lay in the Crown. The influence of war conditions on Austrian politics was shown in the reception of this act of the Emperor's. It was abused, and attacked as a grave political mistake, both in military circles, and by the majority of Germans. They saw nothing in it but an act of weakness and a yielding to "Slav traitors." The idea that Austria-Hungary was a Ger-

man-Magyar realm had gained such possession of the minds of the supporters of the War Government that they simply could not see how untenable was such a view for the wearer of the crown in a realm composed, like Austria-Hungary, of many nations. Whether from the standpoint of human feeling, or from that of the only political outlook possible for the ruler of a multiplicity of races whose hearts had been filled by the War with deep bitterness one against the other, the amnesty was an act of justice and political wisdom. It implied, though it did not express, the recognition that the War had brought with it, for hundreds of thousands among the millions of Slavs and Rumanians, in Austria, the most searching conflict of conscience, for which many thousands of non-German Austrian citizens, involved in the awful moral chaos of war, could find no solution. The proclamation of the amnesty may be regarded as the contribution of the Crown to the efforts going on in the House to reduce the dictatorship; unfortunately, it came too late to serve as the starting point for a saving reconstruction of the Habsburg Empire. Unfortunately, too, the young Emperor did not possess either the far-reaching insight or the truly heroic force of will which alone could have enabled him by his single efforts to retrieve what, even at this late stage, might still have been retrieved from the errors and crimes of the war dictatorship, by giving to the peoples of Austria the well-founded hope of the ultimate transformation of the Habsburg Empire into a free union of peoples, based on their political independence and economic coöperation. Whether, even if he had possessed these qualities, the task could have been accomplished, in face of the widespread destruction war and war government had wrought, in the solidarity even of the educated classes, of every nationality represented in the Empire is a question that cannot be answered today, and can perhaps never be answered with certainty.

In considering the last Austrian governments and their fate, one is met on the threshold by the puzzle of their not perceiving, from the start, the absurdity and untenability of the coexistence of the dictatorship and of the Constitution which it had suspended, once Parliament was again in session. Had Government taken the initiative in ending this state of things, it might have saved itself and its prestige. As a matter of fact, what happened was that the struggle to bring the dictatorship to an end produced a union in the House of the parties opposed to the War and to the German alliance which



destroyed what remained of the authority of the Government. But, in 1917, neither the Czech nor the South Slav party had come out in open opposition to the Austrian State idea. At that time, the Emperor was quietly exerting his personal influence to win back the confidence of the Czechs and South Slavs and consolidate that of the Poles. At that time, moreover, the policy of the opposition parties was one of "wait and see." The successes of the Austrian army, supported by the Germans on the southern front, when the Italians were driven out of Austrian territory and pushed completely across the Piave, gave pause to the propaganda of the *émigrés* and influenced, even more decidedly, the Czech and South Slav politicians who were working along the same lines at home. Hence the struggle of the Opposition in the House against the dictatorship cooled for the time. Meanwhile, the efforts made by the Constitutional Committee to get rid of the thoroughly unconstitutional War Surveillance Office, after beginning with great energy, ran aground on the Government's undertaking to transform this odious department into a purely Austrian ministerial commission. The Opposition majority on the Committee chose a Social Democrat, to make its report, but, since no report was ever made, the War Surveillance Office, under the name of the Ministerial Commission, remained in existence down to the end of the War. Its activity, however, diminished so markedly that, by the summer of 1918, it had practically disappeared.

The spring and summer of 1918 witnessed events which reduced the failing authority of the Government to a still lower ebb. Count Czernin made a violent personal attack on Clemenceau. Revelations of the separate peace effort, undertaken by the Emperor with the coöperation of his wife's brother, caused a bitter conflict between him and Czernin, in the course of which the latter recklessly and irretrievably shattered the Emperor's prestige. As a result, the German Nationalists became envenomed against the Emperor. This feeling, fed from various sources, spread not only in Vienna but throughout the Alpine regions. The writing was visible on the wall. The Emperor was freely accused of faithlessness to Germany. Externally this view, though without any justification in fact, seemed to have some substance. Certainly, from this time on, it lost him the confidence of the mass of his German-Austrian subjects. The Premier, Dr. Seidler, displayed his political ineptitude in a vain effort to win back the confidence of the Germans by the issue of a series



of regulations designed to impose the German-Bohemian program on the Czechs. The sole result was that he lost his last hold in Parliament. His successor, Dr. von Hussarek, who had been Minister of Education in the Stuerghk Cabinet, was quite unable to recapture it. Events, indeed, had got beyond that. The German army commanders had, for long, to decide everything. The victory of the Entente armies on the Western front in July 1918 sealed the fate of the Danubian Monarchy. Reviewing the long series of miscalculations and self-deceptions as to the military situation of the Central Powers, and the political position of the Habsburg Monarchy, and the profoundly mistaken attitude of the Austrian Government upon the non-German peoples between the summer of 1917 and the autumn of 1918, one sees the course of policy and diplomacy, as conducted in Vienna and Budapest, as seeming to have been planned with no other end than the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the suicide of the House of Habsburg.

The battle of the Piave, luckless in its planning, still more luckless in its execution, ended in a great success for the enemy. An irretrievable blow was dealt at the morale of the army on its strongest front. The process of dissolution entered upon its last phase. Hopes of obtaining fresh food supplies from the Ukraine, after Brest-Litovsk, had proved illusory; the shortage became more and more menacing not only at home but in the war zone, and even in the fighting lines. Acts of insubordination, no longer confined to Slav troops, showed the growing unwillingness of the soldiers to fight. Despite the censorship, premonitions of catastrophe began to spread and grow in Vienna and German Austria and among the Alpine peasants. By the summer of 1918, Parliament was plainly stricken by a mortal sickness. At the secret session held to discuss the defeat on the Piave and the heavy responsibility of the commanders for it, the speeches of Czech, South Slav, Italian, and even of some Polish members, showed clearly that the peoples they represented were not counting on the continued existence of the Habsburg Monarchy. They were looking to their national and political future, to the allied enemies of Germany and the Danubian Monarchy, and to the downfall of the Central Powers. Czech policy had long been centered in Prague. To the declarations of the Austrian Government, even such as concerned Bohemia, Czechs no longer paid any attention. In July 1918, the German parties, both middle-class and

Social Democratic, had come together in more or less regular consultation. Without keeping more than a most external contact with the Government, they had prepared, in a series of confidential meetings, for the realization, to their own advantage, of the principle of self-determination solemnly enunciated by President Wilson. All German parties were now agreed that their policy must be exclusively nationalist. The Austrian idea had completely vanished, even for them.

Nevertheless, certain German politicians in the House, who still thought on Austrian lines, conceived the idea that the inevitable separation into national states might be effected peaceably and the Monarchy retained. They suggested that the parties in the Reichsrat representing the different peoples might, by mutual negotiation, discussion, and constitutional procedure, carry through a transformation into a federal State, with the monarch at its head. Ideas of this kind seem to have moved the Court. They found expression in the Manifesto issued by the Emperor on October 16, on the responsibility of the Prime Minister, Baron Hussarek. It was hoped, in this way, to meet the ideas expressed by President Wilson in his declarations as to Austria, in January 1918. Such hopes left out of account the fact that the earlier Austrian program of the Entente, whatever it was worth, had been entirely superseded by the recognition from London, Paris, and Washington of the Czechs as a belligerent nation. In any case, the Hungarian Government, after exercising the most fatal influence on the contents of the Manifesto, broke completely away; the Magyars declared that Austria was taking it upon itself to alter the nature of the State. The Habsburg realm had thus split into two helpless and antagonistic halves. The final dissolution of a State which had endured throughout so many centuries was accomplished when, on October 21, the German National Assembly met in the hall of the old Estates Assembly House in Vienna; and when, a week later, the Czech rising, and the declaration of independence in Prague—bloodless, because it met with no resistance—preluded the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic.

An event of momentous consequences for Europe was thus carried through peacefully, without any kind of bloody collision between nations which, henceforth, looked at each other with the independent eyes of strangers. Peace was preserved, although hunger had become endemic in the towns and industrial areas. Even during the

sudden rise to power of the Social Democrats in Austria and among the Czechs, which shook the structure of society to its foundations—as also during the social struggles in Vienna, Prague, and the industrial sections both of Austria and the new Czechoslovak Republic—the normal routine of citizenship was not destroyed. More remarkable still, the various communal and State bureaus, and other agencies of authority set up by the old Austrian Government, could and did go on with their work, in the new States, without losing a single day. This is an historic phenomenon, and deserves fuller description than can be given to it here. Certainly it is a fact of which the Imperial Austria which had passed away had no reason to be ashamed.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE DOWNFALL OF THE EMPIRE, THE NEW NATIONAL STATES, AND THE OLD AUSTRIAN CIVIL SERVICE

ON November 11, 1918, Emperor Charles performed his final act as ruler, in accepting the resignation of the last Ministry appointed by him, that of Dr. Lammasch, called in on October 23. At the same time the Emperor announced his renunciation of imperial authority, on which he had decided in consultation with the outgoing Cabinet and the new Republican Government. Bit by bit, the powers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarch and of the Austrian Emperor were, in these days, broken in pieces. The dismissal of the last three common ministers took place at the same time as the acceptance of the Armistice agreed on between the Italian and the Austrian army commands. In German-Austria and in Bohemia new national governments were set up. In Austria a provisional Council composed of delegations from the three political parties was constituted; in the Sudetic Lands, the National Committee in Prague took power into its hands and, on November 13, formed the first Ministry of the Czechoslovak Republic. On October 29, the day after the successful Czechoslovak revolution, Croatia had established itself as a sovereign State, and was recognized as such both by Austria and by Hungary. The troops returning from the front were disbanded and dispersed as soon as they entered the homeland; demobilization was the last achievement, and a very notable one, of the old Austrian Railway administration. The final acts of the Imperial Government were partly retarded, partly, however, assisted by the new decrees of the new National States. The most remarkable phenomenon was the absence of any sort of serious resistance or unrest on the part of the masses, and the complete lack of any armed struggle throughout this extraordinary process of dissolution of a mighty administrative machine and the erection, on its ruins, of new National States.

It had become evident, a very few days after the advent of the Lammasch Government, that provincial authorities in the various Crownlands, instead of taking their orders from the Central Gov-



ernment, were voluntarily rendering obedience to the political rulers of the new National States. This withdrawal, sometimes free, sometimes forced on the part of the imperial governors, was, everywhere, the point of departure of the new era. With a view to sparing officials a painful conflict of conscience, the Lammasch Government released the civil service from its oath of allegiance to the Monarch; officials in the ministries in Vienna and other central departments, who by race belonged to one of the new States, were, if they wished, at once released and sent home. In the new States then forming, the entire structure of courts and authorities, hitherto imperial, passed, broadly speaking, directly into the hands of the new party governments which were being set up in Prague, Lemberg, and Laibach. There was no hesitation, either on the part of the officials, in rendering service to the new State authorities created by popular revolution, or on the part of the latter and their newly installed central governments and ministries in making full and unconditioned use of the machinery of the one-time imperial civil service. Even those civil servants who belonged to a national minority—as was the case with thousands of German officials and employees whose homes as well as their employment were in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia—passed for the most part without any resistance into the service of the new Czechoslovak Republic. Those, on the other hand, whose homes were in German Austria, left their posts almost to a man, and were most generously taken into the service of the new German-Austrian Republic. In the same way the numerous employees of German nationality who had worked on the railways in Galicia, Bukovina, and in South Slav territories until the break-up, and had in general been dismissed by the Governments of the new Succession States, moved for the most part into German Austria, where they helped to swell the excessive total of railway servants. The majority of the German officials and judges employed in the Slav regions of old Austria passed, in similar fashion, over to German Austria, although a considerable number of German officials, notably those who knew the Slovene or Croat languages, kept their posts under the new Yugoslav Government.

This, once more, represents a striking political phenomenon. The real seat of monarchical authority and of the power of the Habsburg rulers had always been the system of courts and bureaus, and the imperial and royal civil service, counting many thousands of

persons in its multifarious branches, which managed them all. Now the century-old structure of the bureaucracy was shattered; the old imperial army had melted away; the entire fabric of the Habsburg-Lothringian dynasty was in fragments. Nevertheless, the special spirit which had been developed in the ruling civil service at its very beginnings under Maria Theresa remained intact; the apparatus of authorities built up by generations of imperial statesmen remained intact. It not only remained, it passed over into the new State units built up out of the ruins of the old State, and went on functioning. It functioned, indeed, so smoothly that—certain local difficulties and minor personal conflicts apart—the transition from the now finished past to the new nationalist present was, externally, hardly perceptible. The official stamps were altered; the usual portrait of the head of the State on the office wall was removed; but the officials remained the same, and the countless laws and decrees through which they functioned remained in force with practically no alteration. Even today, five years after the break-up, the rules of administration and the spirit behind them in the various National States show hardly any modification, although legislation in the new Succession States has long been busily engaged in creating new codes of law.<sup>1</sup> In the Austrian Republic, for example, the former imperial and royal machinery of government survived almost everywhere, although there was a fusion, in one and the same office, of the old autonomous local administration and the ex-imperial provincial governors and boards, subject to the installation of new governors, appointed by majorities in the Diets, *i.e.*, by the different political parties. This made no perceptible formal or external change, since, in the old days, the autonomous provincial chiefs being, as a matter of fact, always chosen from among the Conservatives, and generally from the great landowners, were not officials but political leaders. Called upon by the parties to supervise the autonomous administration, they derived their official character solely from the Emperor's endorsement of this selection. There was no change in the district heads and their assistants, who, so far as the people were concerned, were the real possessors of State power and au-

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written the process of transformation has certainly made some progress, especially where the new State has set up a centralized administration, with its center outside the area of the old Austrian State.

thority. Formerly nominated by the Central Government in Vienna they were and they are now nominated, in precisely the same bureaucratic fashion as before, by the central governments and ministries of the new National States.

To understand the attitude of the old Austrian civil servants, one must cast a retrospective glance over the reaction produced upon them, upon their idea of the unitary State, and upon their own relation to the various nations and classes in that old unitary State, by war government and by the political forces and tendencies released by war. War government accelerated a process that had been going on for years, and, in some aspects for two or three decades, within the ranks of officialdom.

True, the outbreak of war produced no sign of any wavering in civil-service loyalty, even in the Slav areas or among the Slav officials. Indubitably, however, the younger Slav officials, if not absolutely opposed to the historic Austrian State—as many of them were—had long been quite cold toward it. Of the Polish officials in Galicia this is an understatement. The idea of a National State was so omnipotent among the educated classes that even the Polish nobles and conservative intelligentsia, for all their loyalty to Austria, openly regarded the attachment of Galicia to Austria merely as a term of probation through which their race had to go precedent to the restoration of Poland. Thanks, too, to the very special form of autonomy which Francis Joseph had, for half a century, given to Galicia, the Poles were a ruling caste in relation to Ruthenians, Germans, and Jews, and, as such, viewed the civil service rather as the instrument of their own ascendancy than of that of the State as a whole. The first Russian revolution gave a mighty impetus to the idea of a Polish State; Polish officials, from that time on, encouraged by Russian experience, became protagonists of the nationalist conception of development. The same idea inspired the all-Polish, or National Democratic party, both in Russian Poland and in Galicia. More and more, in the years just before the War, this party had gained on the old Conservative elements in the Polish Club in Vienna; in the changing Cabinets of the period all-Polish officials were more than once appointed as ministers. In Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, Czechs in the civil service, like their German colleagues there, had been influenced by the new political currents released by universal suffrage. Throughout Austria, in-



deed, the new franchise had released such latent forces, political, social, and national, and directed them to far-reaching aims. At the first meeting of Parliament after the granting of universal suffrage, a great wave of radicalism, in the shape of Marxian Social Democracy, invaded the popular mind, breaking through dams and barriers that had from time immemorial protected the institutions of the State. No class was more deeply affected by this than the civil servants. In the latter years of the nineteenth century, there was an insistent demand from German and Slav areas alike, for the right of trade union organization in the civil service to secure better conditions, higher pay, shorter hours, and the removal of restrictions on their political freedom. This demand often presented itself in a very radical shape, with a definite party and political complexion. From then down to the outbreak of the War, there was constant agitation within the service. Now by threats, now by concessions, the Government met demands that for the old unconditional discipline and obedience there should be substituted a system based on a recognition of mutual rights and obligations; a demand for what in the peculiar Austrian official vocabulary was called a "pragmatic order of service." The whole movement was connected with the immense increase in State activity which had taken place in Austria, as in every other European country, since the 'eighties. In Austria, the development was largely due to the Bismarckian State Socialism of the higher bureaucracy, partly, however, to the teaching of the universities. The nationalization of railways, the establishment of innumerable social institutions, such as compulsory insurance, the continuous extension, by the legislature, of State intervention, and State action in every department of life, involved a steady increase in authorities, offices, and officials. The ministers in their departments and the higher bureaucracy in the capital cities, from the opening of the twentieth century on, had under them myriads of intermediate and subordinate State officials in all branches, and employees in all categories. This army, numbering hundreds of thousands, began to feel itself a power in the State. Its relation to the people was not that of a master, wielding a reactionary and burdensome authority over them, nor did it feel itself to be such. On the contrary it stood, in its own eyes, for a new social and political force, as against the old State, represented by the higher bureaucracy, the military officers' corps and capitalist



business. As a matter of fact, the new civil servant belonged everywhere to the parties of the Left and not infrequently played a dominating part in them. This was the case, for instance, in the nationalist parties that sprang up on the introduction of universal suffrage. They often combined a hazy Socialism—hazy in its theoretic basis, but quite clear in its propaganda and tactics—with a passionate nationalism. The national principle, indeed, began to dispossess the old spirit even among the higher grade officials, who had once seen themselves as the instruments of monarchical absolutism. German students had been for decades, and still were, the backbone of the higher orders of the civil service. Since the 'eighties these students had been drawn more and more into the circle of Radical-Nationalist ideas which denied to Austria, as such, the right to exist. Of this view, George von Schoenerer, the leading German Nationalist in Austria, was high priest for more than a generation. The dominating principle in this national policy, working like a ferment among the young Germans in the Austrian universities and technical colleges, was the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy and the union of all the lands once forming the so-called Germanic Confederation, *i.e.*, the whole realm with the exception of Galicia—with Germany under the Hohenzollern dynasty. As the old Austrian official tradition was progressively taken over and carried on by this generation, its public life was bound to be more and more influenced and dominated by the national principle. The spectacle of Parliament, rent by obstruction, served to convince the upper ranks of the German bureaucracy that the existence of Austria as a State depended on the possession by Germans of a privileged position and a parliamentary majority. Quietly, but efficiently, therefore, the Viennese bureaucracy, sometimes with the aid of the German parties, worked against the incessant demands of the non-German peoples for admission to the ministries and other central departments, and safeguarded the predominance there of German officials. In Parliament, after the granting of universal suffrage, Czechs and South Slavs clamored for equality among all Austrian peoples in the distribution of offices, preferably in proportion to the numerical strength of the various races. Thus, the different national bureaucracies faced one another and the Government as a whole, as particularist groups, invisibly yet successfully supported by their national parties in Parliament and in the Diets.

The result was that the Austrian civil service, both in its hierarchy and in its more or less proletarian mass, had before the War been deeply cloven by new political and national forces. The shattering process was carried far and fast by the War régime. The civil service suffered gravely from the division of the population, under the Food Control Office, into two classes—the self-suppliers and the rationed. Throughout Austria, indeed, this created a great gulf between town and countryside. For centuries a large part of the rural population had been in voluntary subordination, nay, subjection, to the officials. This subordination, in many parts of the country, entirely disappeared, or at best was markedly reduced; the authority of officials, who now belonged, from the economic point of view, to the worst-placed section of the population, was bound to dwindle. Nor was this the only bad effect of Food Control. The Government endeavored to compel areas where there was a superfluity to supply those where there was a dearth. In actual practice, the countryside was locked and barred against the towns, district against district, Crownland against Crownland, with a policy of reckless economic selfishness rampant everywhere. As this situation developed it grew more and more difficult for officials to maintain their authority without coming into collision with the economic interests of one class or another. Thus, from 1916 on, governors and provincial presidents tended to range themselves, with their own particular Crownlands, against the territories surrounding them. District heads in the same Crownland declared their solidarity with their own communes as against neighboring districts, and either disregarded or resisted decrees of the central authorities, designed to produce even-handed justice. In certain cases, this tendency was aggravated by national feeling, as when Bohemian districts with Czech officials presented a united Czech front in opposition to German districts, and to instructions coming from what was regarded as a purely German Ministry, *i.e.*, the Seidler Government. Where this occurred, the effect on the administrative body was bound to be disintegrating and destructive to any sense of State unity. As long as the War lasted, in the main all this went on underground. External evidence was prevented from appearing by the heavy pressure of the military dictatorship. Moreover, up to the beginning of 1918 the great mass of the people, whether German or non-German, had not been brought to despair of the future of

the State. Indeed, social classes remote from party politics still hoped for a peace of reconciliation, and dreamed neither of the military collapse of the Central Powers nor of the Revolution that was to follow it. When the revulsion of public feeling did set in, in the summer of 1918, and rapidly gathered force, the civil service throughout Austria was obviously preparing for great events, and reckoning on the break-up of the unitary State. Privately at first, and later openly, its members began to get into touch with the leaders of opinion, whether in politics or newspaper circles, of the class, group, and nation to which they individually belonged. Within each nation in Austria, the civil servants rightly accounted themselves a decisive force; and when the crisis came they obeyed the call to place their knowledge and experience at the service of that race to which each man felt that he belonged.

In Bohemia and Moravia political leadership had, in all essentials, passed from political parties to the group which opened the deciding struggle with Austria by issuing a manifesto, in May 1917, signed by artists, writers, and intellectual leaders. Its central figures were men who, since the outbreak of war, had carried on a so-called "mafia" against Austria and the State idea, and prepared for the liberation of the Czechs with energy, foresight, and diplomacy. Working at first beneath the surface, they had, later, come more and more boldly into the open. In Prague they took the direction of Czech policy altogether into their own hands, and, from the summer of 1918 on, utterly disregarded the decrees of the Austrian Government.

In July 1918, some idea of the highly unfavorable position on the Western front had penetrated to the German Nationalists in Austria, and among them and among the Christian Socialists questions of the effects of military defeat in the West on Austria, and, above all, on the future status of Germans there, began to raise their heads. In Parliament, the German parties began to close ranks and take counsel together in confidence at many secret meetings, as to the ways and means by which the Wilsonian principle of self-determination could be realized to their own advantage. The result was a united political front among Austrian Germans in a program for the future of German Austria which, without the smallest regard to the aspirations of Czechs, Poles, and South Slavs, would have brought it into the closest union with Germany. The political



agony that was to follow was foreshadowed in parliamentary debate; coöperation between Germans and non-Germans had become practically impossible. Plain for all to see was the fact that the end of the War was to bring with it a dismembering of Austria into its national parts. A few German parliamentarians were still optimistic enough to believe that this dismemberment could be carried out in Parliament by negotiation and agreement between the national parties, and that it would in this way be possible to pass over into a new Federal Austria, in which the dynasty might be maintained. Such ideas were in the mind of Baron von Hussarek, when he drafted and published the Manifesto of October 16. Accepting the original Wilsonian demand for autonomy for the Austrian peoples, this instrument transformed Austria into a complex of national States. Unfortunately, however, it omitted the means by which these national States, the right of self-determination once achieved and exercised, were to be held together as a federal unity. Even among the Germans, the authority of the Crown and of the Monarch had sunk to the lowest ebb. Dr. Wekerle, the Hungarian Premier, replied to the Manifesto of October by denouncing the union between Hungary and Austria—and this although, in the last-minute revision of the text, the Emperor and the Government had gone out of their way to show the greatest respect for the Hungarian State; so much so, indeed, as to denude the Manifesto of any possible effect on the still wavering Slavs.

The Manifesto, however, had a profound influence upon the future course of events, especially as they affected the civil service. It would be a capital error to underestimate the degree to which the old tradition of loyalty to the Monarch and the State held among Austrian officials, especially Germans, and also among the older men of Slav nationality in the service. Thousands of them would have been faced with a grim problem of conscience had the break-up of Austria been brought about solely by revolutionary social and political forces in the different nations. The October Manifesto had an effect never anticipated by its author. At a stroke and in entirely constitutional fashion, it swept away the traditional loyalty and the antagonism to revolutionary forces still alive in the civil service, and made it possible for the officials of each nation to co-operate in revolutionary change. In the most perfectly legal way, by the word of the Emperor himself, conscientious doubts or scruples



were laid. The Austrian Emperor, in his own person, using his authoritative right of constitution making, had by his absolute might set up these new National States. There could no longer be any doubt that each official must in his turn accept and act in accordance with the national duty which the Emperor had made authoritative as the first commandment of political ethics.

For the great majority of old Austrian officials, and above all, for the German officials who had always regarded themselves as the protectors and the symbols of the Austrian State idea, this meant its final obliteration. The sanguine and highly generalized outline of reconstruction for the Fatherland on a national basis, adumbrated in the October Manifesto, was neither here nor there. Impossible any longer to doubt that the last day of the Habsburg-Lothringian dynasty, of its Empire and of the Austrian State, had come. No voice sounded from any of the national camps to which federal reconstruction was now entrusted—in the face of the victorious West—by the now powerless ruler, that indicated the smallest intention on the part of the new National Councils and their leaders to concern themselves in the building of these new national States into a new Empire. It was not to be expected. The victorious Entente had held out Wilsonian self-determination to the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe as the fruit of victory, the sign and seal of their release from the subjection of centuries. The time was now come. Self-determination was about to be made the basis of a reconstruction of Europe, perhaps of the world.

Thus, by a strange paradox, the formal dissolution of the old Austrian State was the last act of the wearer of its crown, and inheritor of its dynastic power. The effect of the October Manifesto on the troops at the front was to start them gathering into national units and demanding to return home to take part in the establishment of the new States, now blessed by the dynasty, and to set the Members of Parliament, organized in their national clubs, flocking back to Prague, Lemberg, Laibach, or Trieste. The civil service could not but act in the same way. Thus, the October Manifesto stands as the historic proclamation of the end of the rule of the dynasty, of the War Government, and of all legitimist government in Austria-Hungary. Nor will history see it as a mean achievement that, as a consequence, the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire took place in legal fashion; that there were no internal conflicts, no

civil war or wars; and that the new States, suddenly called into being, found themselves at once supplied with State governments and the indispensable administrative machinery for carrying them on by the one effective available instrument—the national civil service of the Empire that had passed away. Even those who, in the words of a famous statesman who hated it, sought in vain to find in the world any instance of good done to humanity by the old Austria, must admit that the manner in which the Austrian House, in its last hour, gave a legal basis to the dissolution brought upon it by the War, did, whatever its intentions, assist the peoples to separate without bitterness, and helped their first independent steps on the path of new nationhood.











